DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 304 539 CE 052 052

AUTHOR Alamprese, Judith A.; And Others
TITLE Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS): Impact of the First Year's Task Forces. Final Report.
INSTITUTION COSMOS Corp., Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-942570-33-2
PUB DATE Dec 87
NOTE 193p.
AVAILABLE FROM COSMOS Corporation, 1735 Eye Street, NW, Suite 613, Washington, DC 20006 ($9.50).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; *Adult Literacy; Commercial Television; Community Involvement; Community Programs; *Cooperative Programs; Coordination; *Illiteracy; *Literacy Education; *Outreach Programs; *Public Service; Public Television; Student Recruitment
IDENTIFIERS *Project Literacy U S

ABSTRACT

This report details an evaluation of the effects of outreach activities of Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) on community responses to the illiteracy problem. Part A describes general findings regarding PLUS task force activities during the campaign's first year, December 1985-June 1987. Section I is an introduction; Section II describes activities that preceded the PLUS campaign, strategies that ABC and PBS used to develop the campaign, and simultaneous national literacy activities. Section III presents the conceptual approach and data collection methods. Section IV discusses development and functioning of task forces as mechanisms for coalescing support to combat illiteracy. Sections V-VII describe activities task forces performed to accomplish the three PLUS goals--awareness raising, community collaboration, and recruitment of volunteers and adult learners. Section VIII assesses lessons learned and presents recommendations for policy and practice. Part B presents five case studies of PLUS task forces, which illustrate the strategies used in supporting the PLUS campaign. Each description covers task force development; related literacy efforts; task force organization and operation; awareness-raising activities; community participation; volunteer and adult learner recruitment; and impact on service provision. The five task forces are Beaufort County, South Carolina, St. Louis, Missouri, Los Angeles, California, Maine, and Oregon. (YLB)

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Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS): Impact of the First Year's Task Forces

Judith A. Alamprese
Rhonda Leach Schaff
Nancy Brigham

December 1987

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Final Report Prepared for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting Under CPB Account No. 1709/80636

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ISBN No. 0-942570-33-2

COSMOS Production Assistants: Bernice Hughes

The conduct of this study and the preparation of the final report were sponsored by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting under CPB Account No. 1709/80636. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Corporation of Public Broadcasting.

PREFACE

During its first year, Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS) stimulated the development of over 300 community task forces that worked to combat the illiteracy problem in this country. These local task forces--involving community members from education, media, social services, government, volunteer organizations, religious groups, and business and industry--provided a forum for the organization of activities in support of PLUS. As local efforts, the task forces built upon the momentum generated by the national media campaign, to raise awareness about illiteracy and to promote community involvement in solving the problem.

In the development of the PLUS campaign, the task forces' work was considered critical to the success of PLUS. Thus, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) commissioned COSMOS Corporation to conduct a year-long evaluation of the effects of PLUS's outreach development activities on community responses to the illiteracy problem. Of particular concern were the successful strategies that were utilized by the task forces, as well as the barriers that they encountered in implementing their activities.

This report presents the results of the evaluation, which was undertaken during PLUS's first year, 1986-1987. At the time the evaluation was initiated, the second year of PLUS had not yet been announced. Thus, the evaluation was undertaken with the assumption that the PLUS campaign would end in June 1987.

The report contains two parts. The first describes the general findings from an assessment of the community task forces that were developed as part of the PLUS media campaign. The results of the activities undertaken by these task forces to meet the PLUS campaign goals are described, and recommendations are made for issues that warrant consideration as the PLUS campaign continues. Presented in the second part of the report are five case studies of PLUS task forces, which illustrate various strategies utilized by task forces in supporting the national campaign.

During the course of the year-long evaluation, survey data were collected from 153 PLUS task forces, of the 308 task forces in operation as of December 1986. The task forces who responded to our survey were representative of the universe of task forces in existence at the time of the survey. Thirty of the 153 task forces were studied further through the conduct of telephone interviews, and five task forces were the subject of in-depth case studies. Therefore, the evaluation is based upon a wealth of information from a variety of PLUS task force efforts across the country.

Our data collection activities would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of the task force conveners, who took time from their hectic task force responsibilities to complete our survey. We are indebted to these individuals. Special thanks are given to the conveners who participated in the two phases of telephone interviews. Their insights about the PLUS campaign and the information they provided about their task forces' activities were critical to our evaluation results. Finally, our gratitude is expressed to the task force conveners who organized our five case study site visits, and to the community members whom we met with at the sites. Each of the conveners was most helpful in identifying appropriate individuals for the evaluation team to interview, and in sharing extensive information about their experiences organizing and implementing task force activities.

At critical points throughout the evaluation, we benefited from the guidance of staff from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and from WQED in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Dr. Mary E. Sceiford, our CPB project officer, provided advice on each of the evaluation's phases. We wish to acknowledge her support throughout the evaluation process. As well, we are grateful to Mr. Douglas Bodwell from CPB, for his perceptive insights on our evaluation results.

Special thanks are extended to Margot Woodwell from WQED, PLUS's national coordinator, who was instrumental in obtaining support for the conduct of the evaluation. Margot's thoughtful review of documents produced during the evaluation, as well as the assistance provided by Pat Honisek and Ricki Wertz from WQED, were invaluable to our effort. Finally, we wish to thank the coordinators of the Public Television Outreach Alliance for their time in providing information about their activities.

The members of the COSMOS team who conducted this evaluation are: Judith A. Alamprese, the project director, who prepared Part I of the report; Rhonda Leach Schaff and Nancy Brigham, who joined Judith Alamprese in all phases of project design and data collection, and in the preparation of Part II; Debra J. Rog and Stephanie Lande, who assisted in the analysis of the survey results; and Robert K. Yin, who served as the evaluation's corporate reviewer.

Finally, while we are grateful for the insights provided by others, the authors alone are responsibility for the contents of this final report.

Judith A. Alamprese
Rhonda Leach Schaff
Nancy Brigham

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The adult literacy crisis in America prompted the development of a unique and far-reaching public service campaign designed to address and raise awareness of the issue--Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS). PLUS was the creation of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), and Capital Cities/ABC, and is the first-ever joint project between public and commercial television networks.

In its first year, PLUS stimulated the development of over 300 community task forces working to address the national literacy crisis. These local task forces, involving participants from education, media, social services, government, volunteer organizations, religious groups, business and industry, provided a forum for the organization of activities in support of PLUS. Locally, task forces built upon the momentum generated by the national media campaign to raise awareness about literacy and promote community involvement. The campaign sought volunteers to offer services as tutors, and encouraged individuals in need of literacy services to seek them.

The collaborative process was a key component of all PLUS activities, from awareness-raising to volunteer and adult learner recruitment. PLUS awareness-raising activities consisted of an on-air television and radio programming by PBS, ABC, and National Public Radio (NPR), including documentaries on illiteracy, special informational programming, and public service announcements (PSAs).

In the Beginning

Project Literacy U.S. began in July 1984, as WQED-TV Pittsburgh, a station distinguished by its outreach efforts, became a catalyst around which local literacy efforts in southwestern Pennsylvania began to coalesce. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting became involved increasingly in responding to the

urgency about the nation's literacy crisis, and conducted a poll in October 1984 of public television station managers to identify a solution to the problem. The response clearly indicated a need for outreach programming and a national campaign.

In November 1984, WQED began developing plans to produce a local literacy special for airing in May 1985, which would serve as a model for a national project with a documentary and outreach activities. In March 1985, CPB requested that WQED broaden the base of its advisors to include other PBS station representatives and national adult education leaders.

WQED's local literacy special in May 1985 proved highly successful as an awareness-raising effort in Pittsburgh. In June 1985, CPB used its own funds and a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to support WQED's research and development effort for a national literacy campaign.

In July 1985, WQED was contacted by Capital Cities/ABC, which expressed interest in developing a project for literacy, but lacked PBS's outreach experience. This collaboration led to a program announcement in December 1985 by the two broadcasting systems, thus changing the effort from a public broadcasting project, "Literacy Bound," to the landmark PBS/ABC project, "Project Literacy U.S."

Support to the PLUS Campaign

In late 1985, the CPB Program Fund formed the Public Television Outreach Alliance, a group of five public television stations geographically dispersed across the country, organized to coordinate public television outreach activities. Members of the consortium are WETA, Washington, D.C.; Kentucky Educational Television, Lexington, Kentucky; Nebraska Educational Television, Lincoln, Nebraska; KCTS-TV, Seattle, Washington; and WQED-TV, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. With funding from CPB, the staff of WQED Pittsburgh and Outreach Alliance members organized the technical assistance component of the adult literacy campaign,

beginning with PLUS's outreach development phase.

In February 1986, CPB funded $300,000 towards the nationwide Project PLUS. The MacArthur Foundation issued a separate grant of $900,000 to WQED, including funds for grants to local stations for their outreach activities. Additional funding for PLUS came from the Hitachi Foundation.

In many cases, media involvement centered on radio. In a number of locations, many of them rural, the radio was a highly effective vehicle for recruiting both learners and volunteers. In June 1986, CPB gave funds to help National Public Radio develop special literacy programming, particularly for the Hispanic community. The following year saw a second season of CPB-funded radio programs, and another in-kind contribution from NPR to the project.

ABC and PBS kicked off a national PLUS awareness and outreach campaign with special programming in September 1986. At this time, there were 260 local task forces in place, and over 70 national support organizations.

PLUS 2

The success stories generated from PLUS's first year led ABC and WQED Pittsburgh in January 1987 to consider a second year of PLUS. In April 1987, PBS and ABC announced three new themes for PLUS 2--civic, workforce, and youth literacy. CPB began developing plans to fund production of a second PBS documentary and outreach on workforce literacy, with joint funding from CPB's Education and Corporate Communications departments. CPB's support of the Public Television Outreach Alliance continued. PLUS 2 also attracted funding from Nabisco Brands, Inc.

In May/June 1987, CPB funded a proposal from Kentucky Educational Television (KET), to refurbish two series for adult learners and one for tutors, which were to be available nationwide in 1987-88.

As of September 1987, PLUS had proved to be a dynamic and effective tool in local communities throughout the country, with 353 task forces in all 50 states, and 116 national support organizations. ABC kicked off PLUS 2 with the dramatic story, "Bluffing It," in September 1987 and in October, PBS presented the documentary, "A Job to Be Done."

The COSMOS Study

As PLUS's outreach development phase moved toward completion during the summer of 1986, CPB and others involved in PLUS were interested in gathering information about the task forces' experiences during their formation and development. In response to this need, COSMOS Corporation conducted a study during 1986-87 to provide information about the developmental activities of PLUS task forces, and to determine the extent to which task forces accomplished their own goals and those set by the PLUS campaign.

As part of COSMOS's study, three types of activities were examined: the task forces' effects on raising awareness about literacy; the strategies the task forces used to coalesce community support; and the effects of the task forces' activities on recruiting volunteers and adult learners.

To determine the impact of the activities, COSMOS's researchers used the following methods to compile data:

- Task force conveners were surveyed to obtain a general understanding of the task forces' structures, as well as the community outreach activities that the task forces performed;
- Based on the results of the mail survey, 30 task forces, composed of 25 deemed to be successful and five that had experienced some difficulties in becoming organized, were selected to be the subject of two phases of telephone interviews. In the interviews, conveners were asked to describe their task forces' operations, as well as

the specific activities performed to accomplish the PLUS campaign goals. The conveners also were asked to discuss any barriers they had encountered in their task force work; and

- Case studies of five task forces were conducted to document the collaborative activities undertaken by task force members in support of the literacy effort.

Effects of PLUS's First Year

With the encouragement and guidance of the PLUS designers and supporters, the local task force emerged as a viable mechanism for generating community action to combat illiteracy. COSMOS's study indicated that as task forces developed, there proved to be variation in terms of their organizational affiliations and geographical service areas. In spite of these differences, most of the task forces adopted the goals advocated by the campaign and, in some cases, broadened these goals to include additional literacy activities.

In COSMOS's study, the development, strategies, and goals of five task forces whose PLUS efforts had been effective were examined in depth. These task forces, which included local, regional, and statewide models, were located in Beaufort County, South Carolina; St. Louis, Missouri; Los Angeles, California; Maine; and Oregon. Each task force used different techniques in following the guidelines set by PLUS; yet, each experienced some degree of success in maintaining a sustained effort in garnering community support, and in recruiting volunteers and adult learners.

Overall, PLUS task forces developed according to different geographical and organizational models. No one model or set of specific practices appeared to be the accepted standard; rather, a variety of models and strategies were implemented successfully in each program.

In addition to working with national and state organiza-

tions, task force members established relationships with community and business representatives to solicit their support for literacy activities. Often, contact was made by a task force supporter who was part of the business and industry community. In its efforts, PLUS brought together all literacy providers in a community, in many cases for the first time, to create an environment of trust and understanding.

The majority of the task forces studied by COSMOS accomplished the campaign's three primary goals, as well as performed a number of activities in support of these goals during the campaign's first year. The results are as follows:

- PLUS task forces' work with local print and broadcast media increased the public's recognition of illiteracy and enhanced the visibility of literacy service providers;
- Through task forces' activities, representatives from education, business, labor, government, social services, religious organizations, and the media were encouraged to work together to combat illiteracy; and
- Task forces' recruitment efforts resulted in increased number of volunteers and adult learners participating in adult literacy services. A key component of the recruitment process was the creation of hotlines and referral systems for volunteers and learners. The majority of task forces developed capacities to receive calls and direct volunteers and learners to services.

The various recruitment efforts undertaken by task forces were effective in generating volunteers and adult learners. It was reported, however, that during the campaign's first year, more tutors than adult learners came forward.

Financial Support

Task force members solicited funding from businesses, foundations, and state and local agencies. In some instances, businesses gave donations that could be used by task forces at their discretion; in others, the contributors specified the manner in which the funding was to be used.

Another method used to generate funding was through the submission of proposals to foundations and other groups. Many of the conveners reported that the proposal-preparation process provided a unique opportunity for task force members to work together and reach a consensus on a number of issues.

For many local task forces, "creative donations" and in-kind services proved valuable. For example:

- In Macon, Georgia, a major newspaper sponsored a music festival for the task force and raised $1,500 selling T-shirts and concessions;
- In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Cigna Corporation funded the production of a catalog of service providers, updated quarterly;
- In Omaha, Nebraska, the local ABC affiliate donated four extra phone lines to serve the task force during September 1986; and
- Perhaps the most creative donation occured in Colorado, where the convener, a retired businessman, and his wife donated themselves by becoming trained as VISTA volunteers, and working with the local library's literacy program.

Media Support

One of the most significant outcomes reported was PLUS's effects on enabling literacy service providers to establish direct relationships with both the broadcast and print media. The success of PLUS's national campaign, along with the in-

volvement of PBS television, NPR radio stations, and ABC affiliates in the task force project, increased access to local media. As a result, PSAs about literacy were broadcast more frequently and in better time slots, and newspaper coverage of local literacy services and other information expanded with the PLUS project.

Special Events

Many of the task forces held special events to attract community attention to the literacy campaign, and promote participation in task force activities. These events included promotional and informational events such as business breakfasts, banquets, read-a-thons, and concerts. In efforts to involve the business community more directly with PLUS, task force conveners made presentations at monthly meetings of business groups and community service organizations.

The activities sponsored by PLUS task forces often had an astonishing impact on their audience, as the task forces developed and began sponsoring programs with the professional community. In one instance, a PLUS task force sponsored a panel of eight television and newspaper representatives at the PBS station in St. Louis. The audience was made up of advertising professionals from local agencies and members of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (NATAS). The audience was surprised to learn that many of the advertising messages they created for television are lost on one-quarter of their viewers, who cannot read the written messages that appear on the screen. For these viewers, the medium carries only the message they can hear or see in the visual presentation.

The audience at the panel discussion responded with questions and offered their support to the local PLUS effort. Another result of the meeting was the publication of an article in the NATAS newsletter about the information discussed by the panel, and a NATAS-sponsored full-page ad in the PBS station's

program guide to broaden awareness of the literacy problem.

Public service announcements produced for local task forces often featured local news anchors. Other celebrities, however, also got involved. In Maine, a PSA featured a familiar face to the locals. Brat-pack actor Judd Nelson, featured in "The Breakfast Club," returned to his home state to visit his mother, Merle Nelson, then chairperson of the Portland task force. During his visit, the young actor taped several PSAs for southern Maine's ABC affilitate. Another popular actor, Robert Urich of "Spenser for Hire," was in Maine filming an episode of the series. Seizing an opportunity, the ABC affiliate produced a PSA featuring Urich.

National sports figures also played a role in supporting literacy programs. New England Patriots' quarterback Steve Grogan put in a personal appearance in southern New England, and, in Oregon, it was a group effort when several members of the Portland Trail Blazers basketball team attended a luncheon and taped several PSAs.

Some task forces faced the problem of reaching far-flung, disparate populations, or attempting to bring representatives from isolated areas into a coordinated task force effort. In New York State's North Country, the task force encountered such a situation when the local communities' task force representatives made plans to celebrate New York State's "literacy month." The group polled all the local communities to find out what events were planned, and compiled a monthly events calendar, published in newspapers, newsletters, and brochures.

In many rural areas, radio proved to be an effective tool for recruiting both volunteers and adult learners. In Starkville, Mississippi, where there is no ABC-TV affiliate nearby, radio was used to deliver the literacy message. The station ran regular literacy PSAs, and hosted interviews with the local task force convener.

The PLUS Impact

The PLUS campaign, with its unique involvement of the CPB, PBS, NPR, and Capital Cities/ABC, has been able to bring diverse groups of individuals together in communities across the country to facilitate and implement a project to successfully raise public awareness, and to work toward a solution to the problem of adult illiteracy. Along with the PLUS campaign, other literacy efforts have been developed, reinforcing and building upon the momentum generated by PLUS such as funding programs, network development, and technical assistance projects sponsored by governmental groups, professional associations, foundations, and special projects.

A service delivery issue that became more pressing with PLUS was the need for an articulated basic education system. In such a system, an adult learner could progress from a tutoring program to adult basic education instruction to a high school completion program. PLUS task forces initiated the first step in this direction, indicated by voluntary literacy and library programs working with adult basic education programs in the cross-referral of students.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Labor joined with the U.S. Department of Education to establish an initiative focusing on literacy training and education needs. Several state legislatures already have incorporated language about the provision of literacy services into their legislation.

Business and industry involvement in literacy service has expanded since the beginning of PLUS. The task force conveners indicate that local companies have recruited tutors, provided space for literacy classes and, in some cases, have begun workplace literacy programs.

PLUS has provided new opportunities for literacy service providers to work with the print media. Information about both task force events and literacy services has been reported with increased frequency in newspapers. The impact of PLUS's efforts

are thus summarized by one task force convener: "PLUS has made the job easier to undertake literacy activities; it has given these activities legitimacy and credibility, and has softened the community, especially the media. Initially we had to approach radio, television, and the newspapers about our illiteracy problem; now the media come to us."

Project Literacy U.S. is a unique example of how CPB, PBS, WQED Pittsburgh, NPR, and ABC rose to the challenge to meet a pressing educational and social need, fulfilling the promise of television as a constructive and instructive medium.

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PART A: GENERAL FINDINGS

I. INTRODUCTION

The PLUS Initiative

In December 1985, a unique collaborative effort was initiated between Capital Cities/American Broadcasting Companies, Inc. (ABC) and the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). Prompted by the increasing concern about illiteracy in this country and the belief that this problem requires more national attention, the two broadcasting systems announced the creation of a public service campaign to address illiteracy. This joint campaign, Project Literacy U.S., or PLUS, had three major goals in its first year:

1. To raise awareness about the dimensions of the problem of illiteracy in this country;

2. To strengthen or create task forces to focus community attention on the problem; and

3. To encourage individuals to volunteer their services as tutors and individuals who are in need of literacy services to seek them.

During the first year of the PLUS campaign, two phases of activities--outreach development and awareness-raising--were carried out to accomplish these goals. The outreach development phase began in December 1985 with the announcement of the PLUS campaign, and was completed in August 1986. This phase was designed to coalesce community support. Leaders in education, business, labor, government, social services, and religious organizations were encouraged to create or expand community task forces, set up literacy hotlines, and provide the resources and personnel that would be required to respond to an increasing demand for literacy services. The key mechanisms for promoting collaboration were the task forces, intended to promote the

development of local coalitions that would focus community attention on illiteracy, and stimulate participation in the awareness-raising phase of the PLUS campaign.

PLUS awareness-raising activities began in September 1986 and were scheduled to conclude in June 1987. These activities consisted of on-air television and radio programming by both broadcasting systems, including documentaries on illiteracy, special informational programs, and public service announcements (PSAs). As well, the ABC Entertainment Division included the thematic treatment of illiteracy in the story lines of the dramatic television programs they produced, such as episodes of "Hotel" and "Spencer for Hire" (Project Literacy U.S., 1985).

As of September 1987, 326 PLUS task forces were established in communities across the country during the program's first year. In addition, 116 national organizations pledged their support for the literacy campaign. The success achieved during the two phases of the PLUS campaign led Capital Cities/ABC and PBS in April 1987 to announce the extension of the campaign into the spring of 1988. Building upon the awareness-raising activities undertaken during 1986-1987, the second year of the campaign focused on three themes: "Civic Literacy" (in conjunction with the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution), "Literacy and the Workforce," and "Youth and Literacy." These themes were highlighted by major television specials, additional literacy-related program segments, local programming, PSAs, and off-air promotional events and tie-ins designed to build greater awareness of literacy (Project Literacy, U.S., 1987).

Thus, the strategy of PLUS during the first year of the campaign, which continues into the second year, was to create an interaction between national programming on the topic of illiteracy and community organizing efforts for coping with the demand for literacy services. The national programming was aimed at increasing the general public's awareness of illiteracy, and at encouraging those with literacy problems to seek help. As

well, the programming was intended to stimulate the 212 ABC affiliates and 313 PBS member stations to supplement and build upon the work of the national broadcasting systems. This interactive process between the national systems and local affiliates and stations has been a dynamic and innovative approach to combating illiteracy.

The PLUS Evaluation

As the outreach development phase of the PLUS campaign moved toward completion during the summer of 1986, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and other sponsors, PLUS task force leaders, and the PBS and ABC campaign coordinators, wanted to learn about the PLUS task forces' experiences during their formation and development. Of particular interest were strategies that task forces would find most useful in responding to the awareness-raising phase of the campaign. Thus, an evaluation of PLUS community task forces was undertaken by COSMOS Corporation in August 1986, for two purposes:

1. To provide information about the development and activities of PLUS task forces; and

2. To determine the extent to which task forces had accomplished their own goals and those set by the national PLUS campaign.

Specifically, this evaluation has been designed to assess the PLUS effort by comparing the intended goals of the community task forces with their accomplishments. In addition, notable task force efforts, such as the case study sites, have been identified and described in order to highlight local approaches to addressing adult illiteracy.

Organization of the Report

Part A of this report describes the general findings from

the evaluation of PLUS task force activities conducted during the first year of the PLUS campaign, December 1985-June 1987. (Part B of the report presents five case studies of PLUS task forces, which illustrate the strategies the task forces used in supporting the PLUS campaign.) Section II, Part A describes the literacy-related activities that preceded the PLUS campaign; the strategies that were utilized by ABC and PBS in developing the campaign; and the national literacy activities that were undertaken simultaneously with PLUS.

Section III presents the conceptual approach and the data collection methods undertaken in the evaluation. Section IV discusses the development and functioning of the task forces as mechanisms for coalescing support to combat illiteracy. The next three sections describe the activities performed by task forces to accomplish the three PLUS goals--awareness raising (Section V), community collaboration (Section VI), and recruitment of volunteers and adult learners (Section VII). Finally, Section VIII assesses the overall lessons learned from the first year of PLUS, and presents recommendations concerning the critical issues that need to be addressed as literacy efforts gain momentum.

II. PLUS: RESPONSE TO A NATIONAL PROBLEM

Overview

America's illiteracy problem was becoming the focus of increasing national attention at the time the PLUS campaign was announced in December 1985. A variety of federal and state efforts had been initiated, and private sector organizations were being encouraged to become involved in the issue. The initiation of the PLUS campaign brought a powerful, new dimension to the efforts to combat illiteracy--national exposure about the problem through television, radio, and newspaper. As tools for influencing public opinion, broadcast and print media historically had been effective in raising awareness about social problems in our country, and in promoting citizen participation in the resolution of these problems. Illiteracy, emerging as a critical national problem, was an ideal topic for a full-scale media campaign.

The PLUS strategy incorporated an element critical to the success of media campaigns--the active involvement of community members. Through the establishment of PLUS task forces, representatives from education, business, labor, voluntary associations, social services, government, and religious groups were encouraged to support, both directly and indirectly, the provision of literacy services in communities across the country.

This section of the report describes the key events that preceded the initiation of PLUS, the characteristics of the campaign's strategy, and related activities that have supported the campaign's goals.

Backdrop to the PLUS Campaign

Federal Initiatives. The first major federal effort instituted to end adult illiteracy was the "Right to Read" program, initiated in 1971. While a number of notable practices were developed through this program, the funding level was insufficient for achieving the program's goals. "Right to Read"

eventually was incorporated into the Basic Skills Education Act, which expired in 1980.

The announcement of the "National Adult Literacy Initiative" by the Reagan Administration in 1983 signaled a renewed federal interest in illiteracy. The President's initiative to involve both the public and private sectors in combating illiteracy had four goals: 1) to raise awareness of illiteracy, 2) to stimulate private sector activity, 3) to further public-private sector cooperation, and 4) to generate community action programs.

The Office of the Adult Literacy Initiative in the U.S. Department of Education became the Department's vehicle for coordinating literacy efforts at the federal level, encouraging collaboration of national groups, and recruiting resources and support for literacy from all sectors. This office still functions as a national resource on literacy activities, and has provided the impetus for a number of collaborative activities between the Education Department and other federal offices.

A number of research and dissemination activities were undertaken to support the federal initiative's goals. In one instance, the U.S. Department of Education funded a major project from 1983-1985 to increase awareness of illiteracy, and to improve literacy instruction and practice through dissemination of current information to literacy practitioners (see Crandall, Lerche, and Marchilonis, 1985 for a discussion of key components of effective literacy programs.) A number of policy papers and special reports were produced as part of this project, which addressed issues such as how to define and measure literacy (Cervero, 1984), how to improve coordination and cooperation among literacy service providers (McCune, 1984), the state's role in combating the illiteracy problem (Koloski, 1984), and how to evaluate the effectiveness of literacy programs (Alamprese, 1984). It was intended that the ideas presented in these papers and the others produced by the project would further the development of literacy policy and practice in this country.

In addition to enhancing the quality of knowledge about literacy practice, the Adult Literacy Initiative promoted improved communication among those concerned about the illiteracy problem. LITNET, a national computer information system, was initiated in October 1985 as a mechanism for providing information on literacy programs and practices, funding sources, legislative developments, federal activities, and business and industry efforts. This system continues to operate as an information source for those interested in literacy issues.

Another federal effort instituted at about the same time as the Adult Literacy Initiative was the Federal Employees Literacy Training (FELT) program, which has been a recruitment program for federal employees to serve as literacy volunteers. Hundreds of employees, working both in the Washington, D.C. area and in the federal regional offices, have given their time as literacy tutors in this program.

As the Adult Literacy Initiative was developing efforts to stimulate awareness about illiteracy and to promote collaboration among private and public sector organizations, the U.S. Department of Education's Adult Basic Education (ABE) program supported basic skills programs in communities across the country. ABE programs were being delivered in local school districts, community colleges, correctional institutions, community-based organizations, and in the workplace. Thus, the combination of new and existing federal activities in literacy helped to draw national attention to the illiteracy problem, and provided information about the efforts that were being carried out by organizations across the country.

National Literacy Efforts. Concurrent with the federal activities were a number of literacy efforts that were initiated by national groups and professional associations. For example, the National Literacy Coalition, composed of approximately 12 loosely-affiliated organizations engaged in literacy activities, was formed to promote national awareness about the problem

through a public service effort by the Advertising Council. Through the work of the Council, PSAs were shown in top television markets, and ads soliciting volunteers and adult learners were placed in major magazines. The Coalition also sponsored a toll-free telephone number at the Nation Contact Center in Lincoln, Nebraska, which was used for recruiting adult learners, volunteers, and businesses.

Other efforts at recruiting adult learners and volunteers were being undertaken by voluntary literacy organizations such as Laubach Literacy and Literacy Volunteers of America, which were training tutors and offering literacy instruction through their networks of state and local councils and affiliates. Organizations including the U.S. armed services and corporations with in-house education programs were providing basic skills programs to upgrade the skills of their employees, and to prepare individuals for reentry into the world of work.

The national attention focused on illiteracy stimulated other groups to develop literacy services, such as libraries, churches, and a variety of social service and community organizations. Professional associations including the American Library Association, the Association for Community-Based Education, and the American Newspaper Publishers Association were instrumental in fostering the development of new literacy efforts and in supporting existing services with new materials and programs. In addition to recruitment and support efforts, research was being conducted on approaches used in adult literacy programs. For example, Fingeret's (1985) study of "individually-oriented" and "community-oriented" adult literacy programs recommended that more emphasis be placed on "community-oriented" efforts, as a means of better serving adults most in need of literacy services.

Thus, the increased emphasis on policy formation, practice, and research from the federal government and national organizations helped to raise the interest of individuals already participating in literacy activities, as well as those tangentially

involved in the issue.

State and Local Efforts. During the months prior to the announcement of PLUS, a number of state and local literacy efforts were being developed. While the names of these efforts differed, alternately termed "coalition," "alliance," "council," "commission," and "network," the efforts shared a common purpose. This purpose was to provide a forum for leaders from education, government, business, labor, voluntary organizations, social services, and religious groups to exchange information and to plan activities for combating illiteracy. State initiatives included the Ohio Literacy Network, which coordinated activities of major literacy providers; the Oklahoma Literacy Coalition, which encouraged the formation of local literacy planning councils across the state; and the Kentucky Literacy Commission, which drafted new adult literacy legislation.

The state-level activities were reinforced by the efforts of citywide literacy coalitions, such as those in Philadelphia and Cleveland, and were developed to strengthen and coordinate the delivery of local literacy services, and to promote private and public sector involvement in literacy.

Private Sector Efforts. The Reagan Administration's interest in the nation's illiteracy problem reinforced an emerging concern in business and industry that this country's competitive advantage was at risk, caused by deficits in the skill levels of portions of America's workforce. This concern prompted corporations and businesses to take a new interest in illiteracy, and to explore the ways in which they could assist in dealing with the problem. While some corporations, such as the Polaroid Corporation and Planters Peanuts, already had been sponsoring in-house basic skills programs for their employees, others considered options other than program sponsorship. These options included direct funding to literacy programs, granting of release time to employees for tutoring, providing in-kind contributions to service providers, and hosting of conferences

and seminars to plan cooperative activities between businesses and literacy services.

While private sector organizations were determining their own literacy needs and the extent of their involvement, reports were being issued that suggested the steps that business, education, and public policymakers could take to define literacy standards and raise basic skill levels (e.g., Duggan, 1985). A key resource on these issues was the Business Council for Effective Literacy, a foundation aimed at fostering corporate awareness of adult functional illiteracy and at increasing business involvement in the literacy field. Through the Business Council's newsletters, staff network-building activities, and publication of special reports, information on national, state, local, and corporate literacy activities was disseminated regularly. Two working papers published by the Council identified the short- (McCune and Alamprese, 1985) and long-term (Harman, 1985) resource needs of the adult literacy field, and made recommendations for public- and private-sector action, while another paper assessed the role of volunteers in combating adult illiteracy (Kangisser, 1984).

In summary, the work of the National Adult Literacy Initiative and related activities stimulated new efforts by public and private organizations to publicize the illiteracy problem and to provide literacy services. Although some progress was made, more widespread efforts were needed to promote communication and coordination among literacy service providers and others involved in combating illiteracy.

The PLUS Strategy

A Unique Approach. As the literacy activities described above progressed during 1983-1985, Capital Cities/ABC and PBS organized their plans for the PLUS campaign. The strategy behind the campaign was to combine print and broadcast media activities with community action in a coordinated effort to heighten the

public's awareness about illiteracy, and to encourage organizational and individual support in combating the problem.

Thus, the two broadcasting companies created a media campaign that promoted the establishment of community task forces, and that emphasized awareness raising about the illiteracy crisis through on-air radio and television programming. Given the media campaign's goals of heightening awareness about illiteracy, and stimulating both adult learners' and volunteers' participation in literacy programs, these two approaches were considered essential for its success. A key assumption of the campaign was that on-air programming would be an effective method for reaching a broad spectrum of the nation's population about the illiteracy issue (see Marchilonis and Neibuhr, 1985, for a discussion of the use of television as an instrument of persuasion and awareness-building; and Hargreaves's 1980 report on the results of the BBC project to recruit learners and volunteers in the United Kingdom). However, it also was felt that on-air programming efforts would have minimal impact unless community resources were organized to deal with the response generated by the programming.

The PLUS strategy of combining a media campaign with non-media supports, such as building interpersonal communication networks through community task forces, was similar to other efforts found to be effective in changing individual's attitudes and behavior (Douglas, Westley, Chaffee, 1970). Studies of media campaigns--beginning with Star and Hughes (1950)--have demonstrated consistently the strong power of interpersonal and community-level communication in information dissemination and persuasion efforts. Similarly, campaign efforts on topics such as public health promotion (Maccoby and Solomon, 1981) and crime prevention (O'Keefe, 1986), which involved community action components and a combination of national and local print and broadcast media activities, have been successful in generating community support on social issues. Thus, based on the lessons learned from previous media campaigns, including those of PBS's

Chemical People Campaign (Kaiser, 1983), the PLUS effort was launched by ABC/Capital Cities and PBS.

Support to the PLUS Campaign. The PLUS campaign's design included a support system for assisting local communities in their task force efforts. A key component of this support system has been the leadership provided by WQED, the public television station in Pittsburgh, in conjunction with the Public Television Outreach Alliance--a group of five public television stations geographically dispersed across the country that was formed to coordinate and produce public television outreach campaigns. The members of the Outreach Alliance are: WETA-TV, Washington, D.C.; Kentucky Educational Television, Lexington, Kentucky; Nebraska ETV, Lincoln, Nebraska; KCTS-TV, Seattle, Washington; and WQED, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. With funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, in Washington, D.C., the WQED staff and Outreach Alliance members organized the technical assistance component of the campaign, beginning with PLUS's outreach development phase.

As this phase got underway, ABC affiliates and PBS stations were asked either to convene or to find someone to organize PLUS task forces in their local communities. It was envisioned that the convener function could be filled by representatives from either ABC or PBS; by both representatives acting as co-conveners; or by a station representative joining with a service provider or other community member as co-conveners. It also was recommended that task forces build upon existing literacy efforts, or form new groups specifically for PLUS. Further reinforcement for task force development was provided by the State Directors of Adult Education and the State Library Directors, who encouraged their funded program directors in each state to work with media representatives in task force development.

An additional incentive to participate in PLUS was given to PBS stations, which were eligible to apply for small grants, funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, to

support local PLUS activities. PBS stations subsequently have used their MacArthur grants to fund a variety of task force and media activities.

In order to support the conveners in their task force work, WQED produced a variety of materials for the PLUS campaign, including guidelines for organizing task force meetings, descriptive information about the nature of the illiteracy problem, and other reinforcements, such as posters, buttons, and bookmarks. The guidelines offered suggestions for task force meeting agenda topics, as well as activities that task forces could pursue (Public Television Outreach Alliance, 1986).

In addition to providing materials, WQED and the Outreach Alliance members obtained the support of over 100 national organizations for the PLUS campaign. These organizations were asked to assist PLUS community efforts through the work of their local chapters and members. The number of national organizations endorsing PLUS continued to increase as the campaign entered its second year.

As PLUS campaign activities progressed from outreach development to awareness raising, the WQED-based National outreach staff provided information about PLUS and related literacy events through newsletters, bulletins, and teleconferences. The four Outreach Alliance regional coordinators also served as a communications center about PLUS activities within their regions, and expanded their networks to include task force conveners, as well as the PBS stations.

Related Literacy Activities

Concurrent with the activities of the PLUS campaign was the development of other literacy efforts, which reinforced and built upon the momentum generated by PLUS. These activities include funding programs, network development, and technical assistance projects sponsored by governmental groups, professional associations, foundations, and special projects. While numerous

activities have been initiated since early 1986, a limited number are presented for illustrative purposes.

Governmental Activities. In an effort to increase the literacy services provided by the nation's libraries, the U.S. Department of Education implemented a grants award program under the Library Literacy Program, Title VI of the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA). During 1986, grants totaling $4,736,643 were awarded to 239 state and local public libraries in 46 states. Grants to state libraries were used for coordination and planning of library literacy projects, and for training librarians and volunteers to carry out these projects. Local library activities supported through this program have included the administration of literacy projects, recruitment and training of volunteers, purchase of materials, and the use of library facilities for literacy projects (U.S. Department of Education, 1987). This funding program enabled state and local libraries to participate actively in PLUS task force activities, and increased the capacities of libraries to serve as literacy service providers.

The increased attention to illiteracy prompted the development of policy reports by groups such as the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National Advisory Council on Adult Education. A Mayors' Task Force on Literacy was formed in 1986 to address the problem of adult illiteracy in our nation's cities. Through the efforts of this task force, a resource guide for mayors was published by the U.S. Conference of Mayors discussing the magnitude of adult illiteracy, and suggesting guidelines for the development of citywide literacy initiatives (United States Conference of Mayors, 1986).

With a similar set of concerns, the National Advisory Council on Adult Education formed a Literacy Committee to study the varying estimates of illiteracy in this country and the role that our educational system plays in perpetuating illiteracy. The report issued by the committee presents a comprehensive list

of recommendations for reducing or preventing illiteracy in the future (National Advisory Council on Adult Education, 1986).

Association Efforts. Professional associations promoted literacy activities increasingly during the past four years. The PLUS campaign stimulated further this interest among the associations, as illustrated by the work undertaken by the American Newspaper Publishers Association, which announced a second thrust to its Press to Read Campaign, designed to make newspapers more aware of the illiteracy problem, and to help them increase their involvement in efforts to combat illiteracy. Another effort is that of the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security, which established a national community outreach project in literacy and will continue its support through 1988. In addition, the American Bar Association prepared a manual on literacy and held a National Executive Forum on Literacy to promote interest in dealing with the illiteracy problem (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1986-1987).

Funding Initiatives. Two funding programs supportive of PLUS activities were those sponsored by the Gannett Foundation and the Urban Literacy Development Fund. Gannett's Literacy Challenge state-level grants program complements the PLUS initiative through Gannett program's emphasis on collaboration and cooperation. Literacy Challenge grantees are using their funding to: 1) strengthen and expand statewide coordination of adult literacy efforts, 2) increase understanding of the illiteracy problem and the ways in which individuals, groups, and communities can help with the problem, and 3) increase the resources available to literacy agencies (Gannett, 1987).

With a slightly different focus, the Urban Literacy Development Fund is a special project developed to provide communication, training, advocacy, and grants for literacy efforts in urban areas. The primary objective of the Fund is to assist urban literacy efforts in the effective use of resources and the development of new public and private resources; these groups are

utilizing their monies to support and enhance the activities begun by PLUS task forces during the first year of the campaign.

Summary

It is important to understand the social and political contexts in which PLUS developed, in order to assess the impact of the PLUS campaign on increasing awareness of the literacy problem and on coalescing community support for combating illiteracy. During the two years that preceded the announcement of the PLUS campaign, increased national attention was being given to the illiteracy problem. This attention was due, in part, to the nation's interest in improving the quality of American education. More importantly, however, was the emerging concern among members of the private and public sectors that our international competitiveness was being threatened by deficits in the skill levels of America's workforce. These concerns prompted national, state, local, and private organizations to turn their attention to defining the problem and what might be done to resolve it.

As the PLUS campaign progressed from outreach development through awareness raising, increased support was given to the PLUS effort. This support took the form of new task forces and endorsement by additional national organizations, as well as the development of complementary activities related to the PLUS goals. These activities served both to reinforce and extend the PLUS effort.

III. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This evaluation was undertaken in order to determine the types of activities performed by local PLUS task forces, and the effects of these activities on the achievement of PLUS and individual task force goals. An initial step in the evaluation was to design a conceptual framework, which would provide for both an examination of the overall functioning of PLUS task forces, and an in-depth review of a select number of task forces' efforts. Based on the conceptual framework, the data collection methods for the evaluation were specified, in order to ensure that accurate and appropriate information would be gathered about the PLUS task forces. Descriptions of the evaluation's framework and data collection activities are presented in this section.

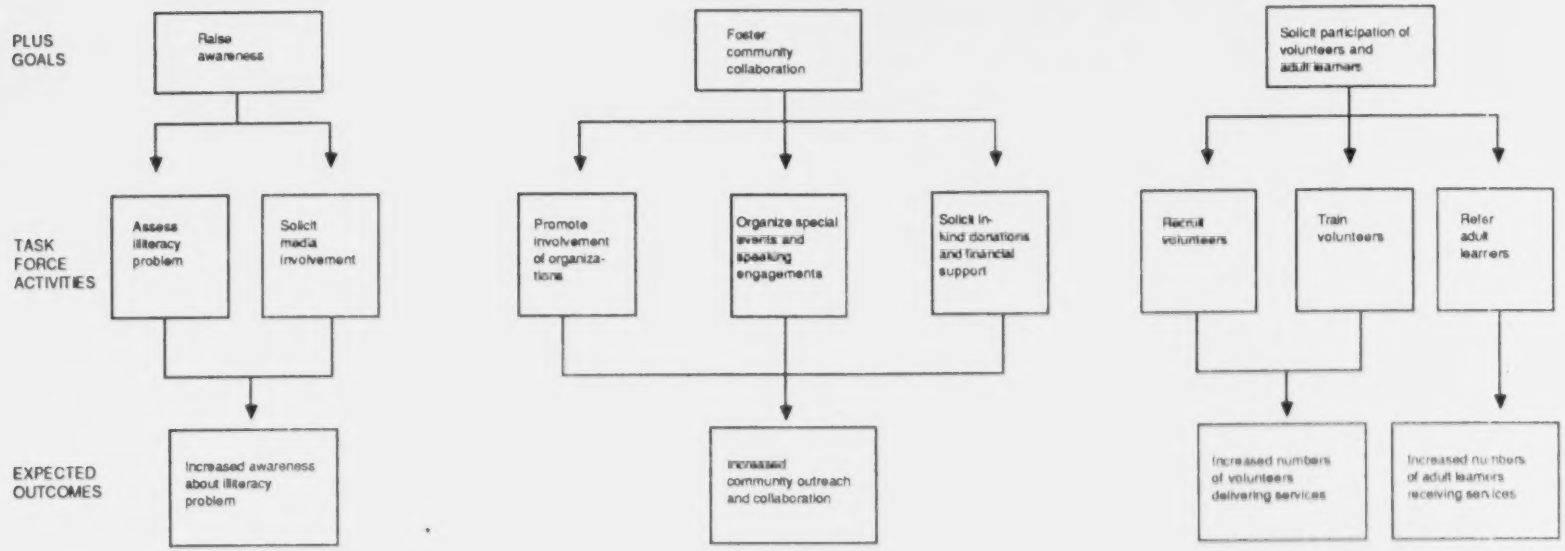
Conceptual Framework

The development of the evaluation's conceptual framework was based on the overall strategy of the PLUS campaign, which is presented in Figure 1. Given PLUS's three goals--i.e., raising awareness, fostering community collaboration, and recruiting volunteers and adult learners--task forces were encouraged to undertake a variety of activities in support of each of these goals. These activities, in turn, were expected to result in four major outcomes: 1) increased public awareness about the illiteracy problem, 2) increased community outreach and collaboration, 3) increased numbers of volunteers delivering literacy services, and 4) increased numbers of adult learners receiving services.

The PLUS strategy provided the basis for the design of a conceptual framework for the evaluation, which consisted of three components: 1) task force structure, 2) task force processes, and 3) task force outcomes. Structure is defined as those properties or characteristics of a task force that indicate how it is organized, and the resources, such as leadership, that are

Figure 1

PLUS GOALS, TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES, AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES



43

used to carry out the task force's work. For example, task forces varied in the number of committees they have and in the organizational diversity of their membership. Conveners differed in the extent of their prior leadership experience working on similar efforts, and in the amount of time they spent on task force activities.

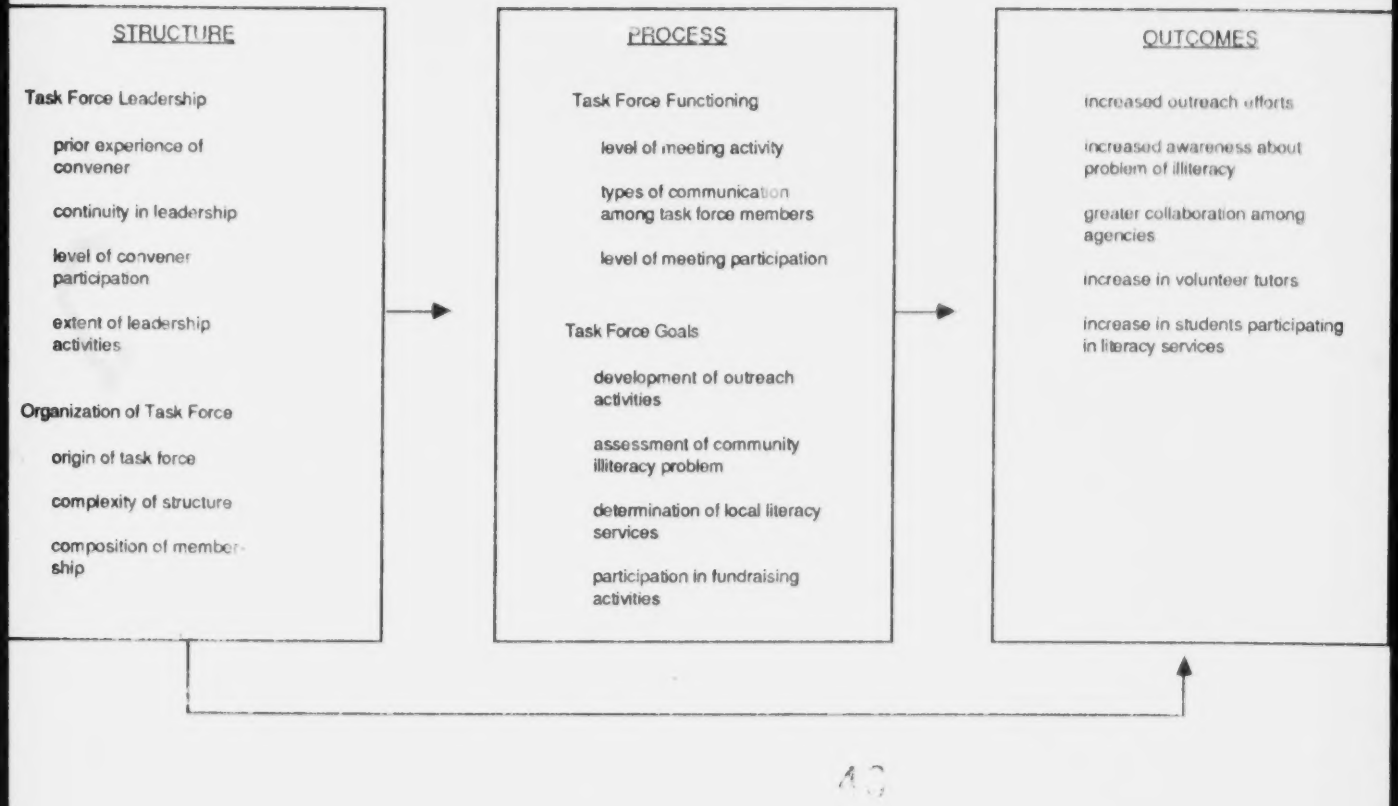
Processes are those activities conducted by task forces in response to the goals of the PLUS campaign. For example, task forces spent differing levels of effort organizing community resources and building awareness about the illiteracy problem. Some established their own goals to complement those of the PLUS campaign; others concentrated on a subset of the PLUS goals.

Outcomes are the task forces' accomplishments that result from their own activities or from the media activities undertaken as part of the PLUS campaign. Task forces can recruit volunteers to deliver literacy services, or they can build cooperation among community services that serve potential adult learners.

Figure 2 portrays this conceptual framework. At the left side of the figure is a listing of the characteristics related to task force structure, such as task force leadership and organization. It was expected that these characteristics would affect the processes or activities undertaken by task forces, the second box in Figure 2. It also was expected that the processes implemented by task forces in carrying out their goals would affect the types of outcomes, listed in the third box, which could be achieved. Furthermore, it was anticipated that the structure of the task forces would have a direct influence on the outcomes realized by the task forces. This framework provided a logic for understanding the relationship between the developmental history that has shaped the organization of the task forces, the strategies or activities that they used to carry out their goals, and the results they produced.

Figure 2

FRAMEWORK FOR PLUS EVALUATION



Data Collection Methods

The conceptual framework also helped to organize the evaluation's data collection activities. The following three types of data collection methods were used to generate information about the history and functioning of PLUS task forces, as well as to identify the strategies that the task forces found most helpful in accomplishing their goals: These methods are: 1) a mail survey of task force conveners, 2) two-staged telephone interviews with a sample of successful and less successful task forces, and 3) case studies of five successful task forces. Presented in Table 1 is a summary of the components of the evaluation's conceptual framework and the data collection methods used to obtain information in each component.

The data collected through each of the methods were critical in determining the overall effects of the PLUS task forces, as well as the specific strategies they have used to accomplish their goals. The mail survey of task force conveners produced information about the development, initial operation, and preliminary accomplishments of the task forces during the first months of the PLUS awareness-raising campaign--i.e., as of December 15, 1987. Of the 308 PLUS task forces in operation at the time of our survey, 153 task force conveners returned surveys with valid information (See Alamprese and Leach Schaff, 1986, for a full description of the survey results).

Based on information collected in the survey about task forces' activities and attendance levels, 30 task forces were selected for two stages of telephone interviews, during March 1987 and July 1987. Twenty-five of the task forces were groups that actively pursued each of the four activities recommended by PLUS, and had high levels of task force attendance, while five of the task forces had difficulty performing at least one of the PLUS activities, and had lower levels of task force attendance. The telephone interviews generated data about the activities and accomplishments of the task forces during PLUS's first year.

Table 1

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION FRAMEWORK COMPONENTS
AND DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Framework Component	Data Collection Method: Survey of Task Force Conveners	Two-Stage Telephone Interviews	Case Studies of Five Task Forces
Structure			
Leadership	X	X*	-
Organization	X	X*	X*
Process			
Functioning	X	X*	-
Goals	X*	X	X
Outcomes			
Increase in outreach efforts	X*	X	X
Increase in awareness of problem	X*	X	X
Greater collaboration among agencies	X*	X	X
Increase in volunteer tutors	-	X	X
Increase in students	-	X	X

* Topic was covered, but in less depth.

Table 2 presents the characteristics of the telephone interview participants compared to the mail survey respondents.

Finally, five task forces deemed successful from the results of the first stage of telephone interviews were selected to be the subject of in-depth case studies. The case studies provided evidence about the functioning of the task forces in their communities, as well as the effects that task force activities had on raising awareness about illiteracy and on the provision of local literacy services. Thus, the case study results helped to elucidate the relationships among the structure, activities, and outcomes of the task forces.

In summary, the combination of survey, telephone interview, and case study data provided a comprehensive view of the functioning of PLUS task forces, as the primary strategy of the outreach development phase of the PLUS campaign. The information produced through these methods also was useful in assessing the impact that PLUS has had on encouraging adult learner participation and volunteer tutoring in adult literacy programs.

Table 2

COMPARATIVE PROFILE OF CHARACTERISTICS OF TELEPHONE INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS AND PLUS SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Characteristic	Telephone Interview Participants: Successful Task Forces Number (N=25)	Successful Task Forces Percent (%)	Less Successful Task Forces Number (N=5)	Less Successful Task Forces Percent (%)	Survey Respondents Number (N=153)	Survey Respondents Percent (%)
Geographical Location of Task Force						
Northeast	5	20	0	0	14	9
Midwest	7	28	2	40	46	30
Southeast	6	24	2	40	52	34
Southwest	2	8	0	0	17	11
West	5	20	1	20	24	16
Affiliation of Task Force Convener						
PBS station	2	8	1	20	14	9
ABC station	1	4	0	0	2	1
Adult education program	6	24	1	20	44	29
School system	2	8	0	0	34	22
Higher education	3	12	1	20	21	14
Voluntary literacy service provider	1	4	1	20	17	11
Local government	1	4	0	0	3	2
State government	5	20	0	0	5	3
Business/industry	0	0	0	0	3	2
Library	4	16	0	0	11	7
Type of Task Force						
Independent	14	56	3	60	93	61
Developed from existing organization	11	44	2	40	60	39
Number of Task Force Meetings Held During First Six Months						
0-4	6	24	3	60	76	50
5-10	12	48	2	40	57	37
11 +	7	28	0	0	15	10
No answer	0	0	0	0	5	3
Percent Attendance at Task Force Meetings						
Less than 50	0	0	1	20	26	17
51-75	13	52	4	80	51	33
Greater than 75	12	48	0	0	67	44
No answer	0	0	0	0	9	6

IV. THE TASK FORCE AS A MECHANISM FOR CHANGE

Overview

The designers of PLUS envisioned that the task forces would be the primary mechanisms for generating support among local community members for the campaign. Each task force was to have a convener or co-conveners, selected from the media, education, or other community groups. The convener's role was to organize and facilitate the task force's activities. Under the leadership of the convener, local task forces were to build upon and expand the national media activities undertaken by Capital Cities/ABC and PBS.

Of critical importance was the role of task force members in "personalizing" the PLUS campaign in local communities, through their work in assessing the local literacy problem, determining the available literacy services, and establishing a local media campaign. Based on the results of previous media campaigns, the PLUS designers were aware of the importance of making the illiteracy problem relevant to community members, so that they would be motivated to take action, either as volunteers, adult learners, or general supporters of the cause.

This section of the report presents our findings about the development and leadership patterns of 153 PLUS task forces, and their activities during the initial months of the PLUS campaign. This information is drawn primarily from our analysis of the surveys completed by task force conveners, and in part, from data collected from the conveners who participated in the telephone interviews and case studies.

Task Forces' History and Organizational Structure

Developmental History of Task Forces. As the PLUS campaign got underway in December 1985, the Public Television Outreach Alliance coordinators began their technical assistance activities. Part of this assistance involved disseminating information

to ABC affiliates and PBS stations about the organization and development of task forces. These media representatives were asked to contact community members and to help establish task forces, including the selection of a task force convener.

Through the Public Television Outreach Alliance's activities, all areas of the country were invited to establish task forces. As of December 1986, nearly half (44 percent) of the task forces were located in the southeastern region of the United States, a geographical area in which states such as South Carolina and Florida established statewide literacy initiatives prior to PLUS. In addition to the Southeast, task force efforts also were concentrated in the Midwest. Presented in Table 3 are the distributions for geographical location of task forces and affiliation of task force conveners. Statistics for the total population of task forces at the time of the survey (308) are compared with those for the survey respondents (153 task force conveners). As is indicated in Table 3, the survey respondents were, overall, similar to the total population of PLUS task force conveners, which adds to the validity of the survey results.

In an effort to generate interest in PLUS, communities were encouraged to develop task forces as new, independent structures, or to incorporate PLUS activities into existing groups, such as state or local literacy councils. The survey results indicated that 61 percent of the task forces participating in the survey were formed independently. Of the task forces that developed from existing literacy groups, the majority (60 percent) were based in a local literacy council.

Role of Task Force Convener. A critical component of the PLUS campaign has been the emphasis placed on the convener's role in facilitating a task force's development. Our survey results indicated that half of the task forces were being led by conveners who were located in an educational organization--e.g., an adult education program, a school system, or a higher education institution. While representatives from other types of organiza-

Table 3

COMPARATIVE PROFILE OF CHARACTERISTICS OF TOTAL PLUS TASK FORCE POPULATION AND PLUS SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Characteristic	Total Population Number (N=308)	Total Population Percent (%)	Survey Respondents Number (N=153)	Survey Respondents Percent (%)
Geographical Location of Task Force				
Northeast	22	7	14	9
Midwest	83	27	46	30
Southeast	136	44	52	34
Southwest	31	10	17	11
West	37	12	24	16
Affiliation of Task Force Convener				
PBS station	18	6	14	9
ABC station	6	2	2	1
Adult education program	59	19	44	29
School system	62	20	34	22
Higher education	40	13	21	14
Voluntary literacy service provider	40	13	17	11
Civic and fraternal organization	3	1	0	0
Local government	9	3	3	2
State government	6	2	5	3
Business/industry	3	1	3	2
Religious group	3	1	0	0
Library	18	6	11	7
No information	43	14	0	0

tions, such as voluntary literacy service providers, also were named as task force conveners, the education-based members were more likely to assume responsibility for organizing task force activities. This finding suggests that individuals may be more willing to undertake an additional responsibility when the activity (e.g., participation as task force convener) relates to the job they already are performing, or is a topic of high priority for them.

In most instances, task forces had a single convener. However, some used an alternative form of leadership--the co-convener model. Generally, a representative from either a PBS station or ABC affiliate joined forces with an education service deliverer in organizing task force activities. Conveners interviewed in our study indicated that this model was effective in coalescing community support, because it combined the media representative's expertise and strength as a neutral leader with the education provider's network of contacts in the literacy community.

Task force development also was examined in terms of continuity in leadership and the experience of the individual holding the leadership position. Our survey results indicated that 84 percent of the respondents were conveners since the inception of the task force. Of these conveners, 40 percent had prior experience leading task forces, with half having held at least two similar positions. An example of conveners' prior leadership roles was their direct experience organizing community task forces, as reported in our interviews with PBS station representatives who were involved with the "Chemical People" campaign. Conveners located in education organizations, such as school districts and community colleges, were more likely to have led committees and ad hoc groups, rather than formal task forces.

Another aspect of task force leadership are the choices that conveners made in focusing their activities. In our survey, conveners were asked to indicate their three most important responsibilities. The options given to conveners reflected a

range of responsibilities, from those related to the internal management of the task forces, such as recruitment and coordination, to those requiring greater interaction with the community, such as training tutors and raising money for task force activities. As is seen in Table 4, the responsibilities checked most frequently by conveners tended to be those concerned with internal management. Of less importance for conveners were responsibilities such as raising money and developing a speakers bureau. Conveners' decisions to concentrate initially on the internal management of their task forces suggests that these types of activities may be most critical for coalescing a group of diverse community members.

In our survey, conveners also were asked about the amount of time they spent on task force activities. While the majority (73 percent) of conveners responding to the survey indicated that their task force responsibilities were carried out as part of their regular job or were paid by funds other than their job, 71 percent of the conveners also reported that they were spending less than seven days a month working on PLUS activities. Given that the majority of the conveners were based in education agencies, and were likely to have heavy workloads, it is not surprising that limited time was being devoted specifically to PLUS activities. Alternatively, in the instances where task force activities were integrated with the convener's job, it is possible that the respondents did not distinguish the two in estimating the time they had spent on task force activities.

Organizational Structure of Task Forces. As PLUS task forces developed from existing organizations or as independent groups, three types of task force structures emerged. These types, discussed in our interviews with task force conveners, are: 1) statewide task force, 2) regional task force, encompassing a multi-county area, and 3) local task force, covering a contained geographical area, such as a city.

Table 4

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES CHECKED AS IMPORTANT
BY PLUS TASK FORCE CONVENERS

Major Responsibility	Conveners Checking Each* Number (N=150)	Percent (%)
Convene task force meetings	78	52
Recruit task force members	76	51
Coordinate task force activities	76	51
Facilitate task force meetings	67	45
Share information about task force activities	61	41
Recruit students	44	29
Recruit tutors	30	20
Train tutors	24	16
Raise money for task force activities	13	9
Develop speakers bureau	5	3

* Each task force convener could check up to three responsibilities.

Statewide task forces, with designated PLUS conveners, have functioned as coordinating mechanisms for PLUS activities within states. Some statewide efforts have included local PLUS coalitions. In these cases, the state convener acted as liaison with coalition coordinators and other task force members, providing information about local coalition activities, and encouraging statewide PLUS functions. The PLUS efforts in Oregon and Maine exemplify this model. An alternative form of a statewide task force is one where there has been a single task force, which functions as a coordination group for statewide PLUS activities. The New Jersey and Rhode Island PLUS efforts are examples of this model, where the convener created a committee structure to organize PLUS functions. In both types of statewide PLUS efforts, a critical element has been the presence of a centralized coordinator, who has access to local coalitions and committees, and is in a position to provide leadership to these groups and other task force members. The leadership for the task forces cited above has come from the state education departments in these states.

Regional task forces developed where there was a need to have a central PLUS effort that covers more than one county. As with the statewide structures, differing forms of regional task forces have emerged. In some areas--e.g., Beaumont, Texas--the regional task force has served as an umbrella organization for local PLUS task forces, where the convener provides support to and shares information with the local efforts.

Another form of a regional task force is that illustrated by the Los Angeles area task force, in which task force members represent a diverse group of literacy service providers and other organizations in the multi-county area surrounding Los Angeles. In this case, the task force has both a director and co-conveners, who organize specific PLUS activites, and sponsor functions in conjunction with the specific literacy efforts of task force members.

The third type of PLUS effort is the local task force, which has been established in cities ranging from small communities to large metropolitan areas. Some of these local PLUS task forces have developed independently in response to the PLUS campaign, such as Starkville, Mississippi, while others have been formed at the request of a state official, such as those organized by the State Director of Adult Education in South Carolina. Both types of local task forces were organized specifically for PLUS, and were formally called PLUS task forces.

In contrast, local support has been given to the PLUS campaign by existing literacy groups, which adopted the PLUS goals and integrated PLUS activities into their own agendas, but have not used the word "PLUS" in their organizational titles.

In addition to differing organizational forms, PLUS task forces also varied in the complexity of their structures. Two aspects of this complexity were examined in our survey: 1) the presence of a chairperson in addition to a convener, and 2) the formation of committees. The results indicated that almost half (43 percent) of the task forces responding to the survey had named a chairperson. As well, 46 percent of the task forces had at least one committee, with half of these task forces having from four to six committees. Nine different committee titles were mentioned by respondents, with "publicity" being the most prevalent committee title, reflective of the emphasis encouraged by the PLUS campaign on awareness raising.

In the early months of the outreach development phase of the PLUS campaign, much emphasis was placed on the recruitment of task force members from a diversity of local and national organizations. In our survey, conveners were asked to check the organizations that were represented by members of their task forces. Table 5 presents these results. As is shown in the table, the task forces that responded to the survey had a variety of members, with the voluntary literacy organizations and adult education programs being the most frequently mentioned affiliations.

Table 5

ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS REPRESENTED ON TASK FORCES

Organization/Agency	Task Forces with Organizational Affiliations* Number (N=153)	Percent (%)
Media		
ABC station	100	65
PBS station	95	62
Education agencies		
Adult education program	125	82
School system	97	63
Higher education	87	57
Community Organizations		
Voluntary literacy service provider	131	86
Social service provider**	120	78
Civic and fraternal organization	74	48
Government		
Local government	66	43
State government	53	35
Correctional institution	38	25
Federal government	21	14
Other		
Business/industry	86	56
Religious group	76	50
Library	28	18

* Respondents checked all organizations represented by task force members.

** Social service providers include local community organizations that deliver human or social services.

A final component of task force structure examined in the survey was the communication mechanisms used by conveners to inform members about task force activities. The process of providing timely and accurate information to members is particularly important when a group is composed of individuals with competing responsibilities and multiple commitments. The survey results indicated that almost all conveners (99 percent) established at least one formal method to communicate with task force members, with written notices being the strategy most frequently mentioned by conveners (86 percent).

Task Force Participation, Goals, and Activities

In an attempt to understand the experiences of conveners during the initial months of task force development, information about three types of task force processes was collected in our survey. The first was the extent of task force participation, as defined by the size of task force membership and level of attendance at task force meetings. The second concerned task force goals--i.e., the types of goals specified by the task forces and the extent to which these goals matched those of the PLUS campaign. The third process was the activities undertaken by task forces to meet their goals.

Task Force Participation. Task forces ranged in size from two members to over 65 members, with the majority of task forces (79 percent) having at least 10 members. Most of the survey respondents reported that their task forces meet monthly, perhaps reflecting the level of planning and activities that was being undertaken by task forces during the beginning of the awareness-raising phase of PLUS. In addition, over half (53 percent) of the conveners indicated that at least 75 percent of their members attend task force meetings regularly. Seventeen percent reported 100 percent attendance.

Determination of Task Force Goals. Task forces were encouraged by the PLUS campaign to set goals and undertake activ-

ities that would allow them to fulfill their goals. The survey results indicated that 91 percent of the respondents reported that their task forces had established goals, primarily through discussion with task force members. As well, half of the respondents who had established goals indicated that their task forces had adopted the three major PLUS goals: 1) raise awareness about illiteracy, 2) foster community collaboration, and 3) recruit adult learners and volunteers.

In the survey, task force conveners were asked to check their task forces' five most important goals, based on a list derived from the PLUS campaign literature. In addition, conveners were asked to indicate if each goal were completed, or was in the process of being implemented. Table 6 presents these results. As is shown in the table, at least 60 percent of the task force conveners specified the following four goals: 1) coordinate media activities, 2) recruit tutors, 3) refer students to literacy service providers, and 4) identify literacy service providers. The least frequently mentioned goal was to raise funds for task force activities. In terms of goals that were completed by task forces at the time of the survey, the two most frequently reported were the identification of literacy service providers and the assessment of the extent of the community's literacy problem. Even though the identification of the community's literacy problem was not among the top four reported goals, it was one that was indicated as completed by those who had chosen to undertake it.

The task forces' priorities in setting goals correspond directly to the activities that were being suggested by PLUS for the awareness-raising phase of the campaign. In terms of the sequencing of activities, it is interesting to note that a number of the task forces already had identified local literacy service providers, which needed to be done before learners and volunteers could be referred.

Table 6

MAJOR GOALS SPECIFIED BY PLUS TASK FORCE CONVENERS

Goal	Total N Specifying Goal* (N=153)	Percent of Conveners Specifying Goal (%)	Of Goals Specified: Percent in Progress (%)	Of Goals Specified: Percent Completed (%)
Coordinate media activities	110	72	87	13
Recruit tutors	107	70	95	6
Refer students to literacy service providers	98	64	93	7
Identify literacy service providers	92	60	61	39
Solicit business involvement	68	44	91	9
Train tutors	65	42	97	3
Identify extent of illiteracy in community	56	37	63	38
Develop resource referral directory	50	33	70	30
Raise funds for literacy activities	45	29	89	11

* Each respondent was asked to specify five most important goals.

Task Force Activities. One purpose of our evaluation was to determine the extent to which task forces have implemented the goals established by the PLUS campaign. Thus, task force conveners were asked in the survey to indicate their task forces' participation in four activities encouraged by the PLUS campaign in support of these goals (Public Television Outreach Alliance, 1986):

1. Determine local literacy services;
2. Develop community outreach activities;
3. Assess community's illiteracy problem; and
4. Participate in fund raising and establish a mechanism to receive funds.

The majority of survey respondents (at least 70 percent) reported that they had undertaken the first three of these activities, as in indicated in Table 7. The fourth activity, fund raising, was noted by almost half of the respondents (45 percent). In addition, 46 percent of the conveners indicated that their task forces had established or had an existing mechanism for receiving funds.

Implementation of PLUS Activities. In addition to specifying the goals being carried out by their task forces, conveners were asked to specify the methods used to implement each of the activities suggested to support the PLUS goals. For the first activity, determine local literacy services, the two most frequently used methods were: 1) discussion with task force members (70 percent), and 2) information data collection from service providers (70 percent). Nearly half of the respondents (45 percent) indicated that they had reviewed existing written information, rather than having participated in an interactive process to obtain the data.

Table 7

PLUS PROJECT ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY TASK FORCES

Type of Activity	Task Force Number Performing Activity (N=153)	Percent
Determined existence of local literacy services (e.g. discussion with task force members; formal data collection)	143	94
Developed community outreach activities (e.g., television and radio broadcasts, newspaper articles)	124	87
Assessed community's illiteracy problem (e.g., review of published information; new data collection)	106	70
Participated in fund raising (e.g., solicit funds from business; submit proposals to foundations)	67	45
Developed mechanism to receive funds (e.g., establish new account; use accounts of members' organizations)	64	46

In keeping with the thrust of the PLUS campaign, the most frequently reported community outreach activities were television broadcasts and PSAs, used by task forces to promote awareness about illiteracy and to recruit learners and volunteers.

One primary method was utilized to assess the community's illiteracy problem, a third activity of PLUS. The majority (88 percent) of survey respondents who carried out this activity did so by using existing published information. This finding is not surprising, given the amount of information that state departments of education have made available on the issue. Less frequently reported methods were the collection of new information (22 percent) and the polling of task force members (17 percent).

Those task forces engaged in fund raising, a fourth activity, tended either to solicit funds from businesses (70 percent), or to submit proposals to local or national foundations (51 percent). Of those task forces that had identified a mechanism for receiving funds, a quarter of them set up their own accounts; the remainder received funds through one of their members's organizations.

PLUS task forces performed each of these activities in some very interesting ways. Vignette No. 1 illustrates the strategies used by one local task force to raise awareness about illiteracy and to raise funds to support literacy services.

Summary

With the encouragement and guidance of the PLUS campaign designers and supporters, the local task force emerged as a viable mechanism for generating community action to combat illiteracy. As task forces developed, there was variation in terms of the conveners' organizational affiliations, and in task forces' structures and geographical service areas. In spite of these differences, most task forces adopted the goals advocated by the campaign and, in some cases, broadened these goals to include additional literacy activities.

Vignette No. 1

OFF AND RUNNING IN WATERVILLE, MAINE

Under the direction of the local adult basic education program directors, the Waterville Task Force began its activities in October 1986, and never slowed down. At that time, local humorist Tim Semple accepted the challenge to be the honorary chairperson, and told a press conference that there was no time to lose debating the extent of the illiteracy problem. Instead, the task force immediately tackled--and accomplished--the following agenda of events.

November: Citywide marquees, with Wendy's and Holiday Inn carrying the message, "Learn to Read," along with the local adult education phone number.

December: The task force conducted a three-day Phone-A-Thon, in which members called every fifth number in the local phone book, in a very successful initiative to recruit tutors.

January: Recruitment efforts focused on an "Open House for Learning" and booths in the local mall.

February: Local radio station WTVL produced a show for the task force.

March: The effort focused on English-as-a-second-language and the month was declared "Citizenship Voter Awareness Month."

April: The task force held a paperback and used-book sale to benefit the cause of literacy.

May: Volunteers and learners were rewarded with an awards banquet.

In addition, local radio stations produced PSAs, and the Waterville paper ran an "easy reading section." The results of the campaign, in addition to impressive recruitment figures, are described by the directors as, "Everybody in town knows we are in business."

The data from our survey of task force conveners, and from interviews with 30 of these conveners, indicated that the task forces generally progressed according to the expectations of the PLUS designers during the initial months of the campaign. The planning and outreach activities undertaken by PLUS task force members provided them with information and contacts that they could use as the PLUS effort moved ahead.

V. AWARENESS: STIRRING OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Overview

This section of the report presents our findings about the activities performed by 30 task forces to accomplish the first PLUS goal--to raise awareness about illiteracy. (The second and third goals are discussed in Sections VI and VII, respectively.) Through telephone interviews with task force conveners, and meetings with task force members and community representatives in the case study sites, we were able to obtain a comprehensive view of the successes and frustrations of a cross-section of PLUS task forces across the country.

As previously described in this report, a number of literacy efforts were established prior to the formation of PLUS task forces. The onset of PLUS also stimulated a variety of complementary literacy activities, which helped to enhance and extend the PLUS efforts. In our analyses of task force activities and outcomes, it has been possible to establish how the PLUS media activities and individual task force efforts influenced the task forces' overall accomplishments. However, it has been difficult to determine whether these task force accomplishments have been independent of other literacy activities. Thus, our analyses have sought to explain the ways in which the PLUS campaign has contributed to the task forces' efforts to enhance the public's understanding of illiteracy, and to encourage community members to become involved in literacy services, either as adult learners or as support to these services.

PLUS Awareness-Raising Activities

While the PLUS media campaign involved documentaries on illiteracy, segments on news and special programs, and the inclusion of illiteracy in the story lines of various ABC entertainment programs, task forces also were encouraged to work with their ABC affiliates, PBS stations, and newspapers to generate

local media events. The task forces differed in the extent to which they undertook the suggested activities, and were creative in customizing the suggestions to their community contexts. Presented in Figure 3 are the key awareness-raising activities that have been performed by the task forces we studied in depth, as well as the outcomes that have been accomplished as a result of these activities. The patterns of task force experiences for each of these activities are discussed below.

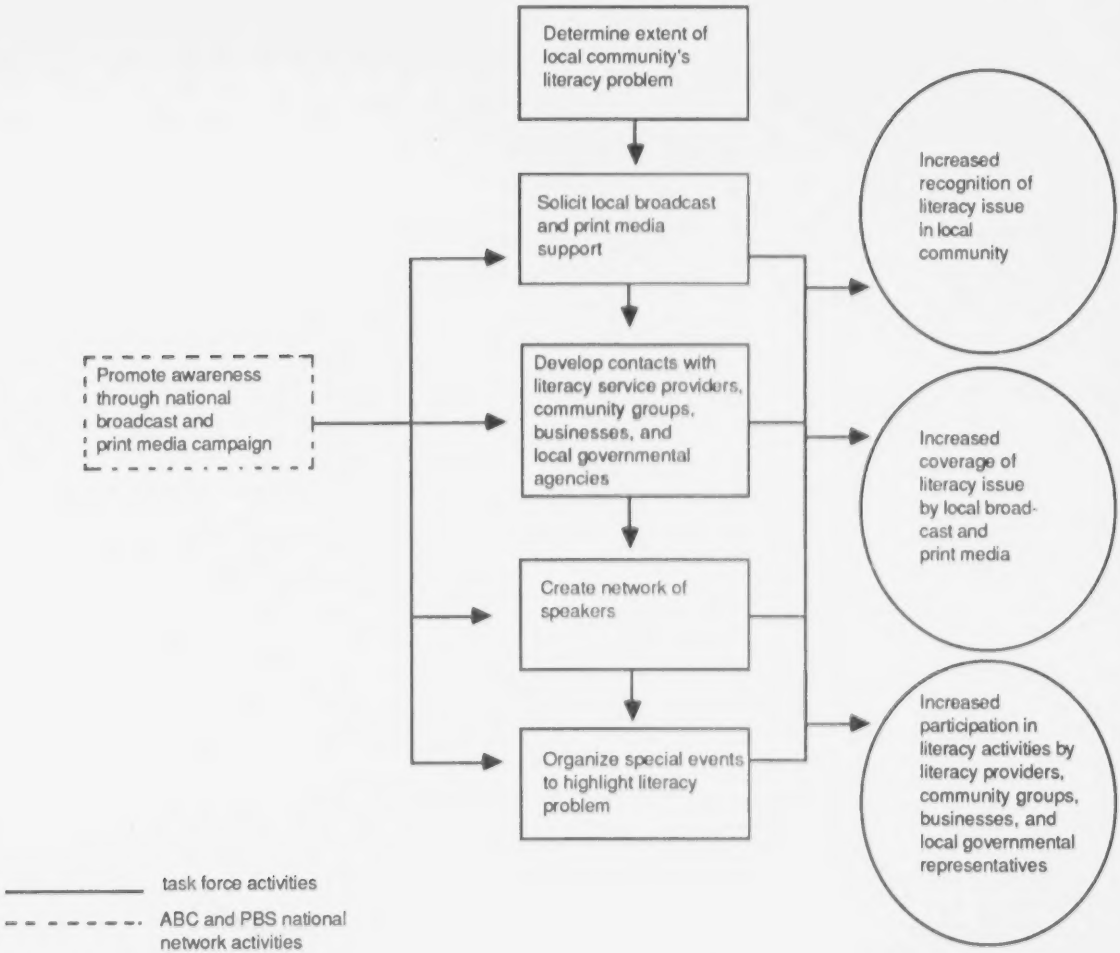
Assessing Illiteracy. All but two of the conveners we interviewed reported that their task forces had gathered information about the extent of the illiteracy problem in their local communities or cities. Nearly all (95 percent) of the task forces who undertook this activity used census data to compile their statistics, or information from existing reports. In many instances, the conveners who were service providers had gathered statistics on the illiteracy problem in the process of preparing proposals for funding of literacy services. A few of the conveners expanded the census information by gathering data from social service agencies and other community groups, as part of their efforts to establish relationships with organizations that serve potential adult learners.

When asked whether it was useful to have statistics on illiteracy available, conveners responded that the information had been particularly useful in meetings with local government officials and representatives from business--those individuals who routinely use statistical data to make decisions. Conveners who were not literacy service providers reported that they found it beneficial to gather the statistics, and often were surprised at the magnitude of the problem in their own communities. Interestingly, most of the conveners felt that while it was helpful to have data, its preciseness was not as important as having general information that "personalized" the problem to the local area.

Media Support. One of the most significant outcomes reported by conveners was PLUS's effects on providing literacy

Figure 3

RAISING AWARENESS: KEY ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES


Determine extent of local community's literacy problem
Solicit local broadcast and print media support
Develop contacts with literacy service providers, community groups, businesses, and local governmental agencies
Create network of speakers
Organize special events to highlight literacy problem
Promote awareness through national broadcast and print media campaign
Increased recognition of literacy issue in local community
Increased coverage of literacy issue by local broadcast and print media
Increased participation in literacy activities by literacy providers, community groups, businesses, and local governmental representatives
task force activities
ABC and PBS national network activities

service deliverers with direct linkages to both the broadcast and print media. Prior to PLUS, a number of the service providers had approached television and radio stations, and newspapers, only to receive a disinterested response. The focus on literacy provided by the national campaign, as well as the involvement of ABC affiliates and PBS stations in the task force process, increased service providers' access to the local media. Conveners reported that as a result of PLUS, PSAs about literacy were broadcast more frequently and in better time slots. Newspaper coverage of local literacy services also expanded with PLUS.

In the terms of the broadcast media, all conveners reported some involvement with either an ABC affiliate or PBS station. The extent of involvement depended on factors such as: station managers' interest in and support of PLUS; the availability of a public affairs or public relations staff person to devote time to the campaign; and the "news worthiness" and timeliness of the topic for the station. Of the 30 task forces we studied, 32 percent had worked with either the ABC affiliate or PBS station to produce a special program or documentary on illiteracy. An example of cross-network cooperation was the effort undertaken in Lubbock, Texas, where the PBS Station funded and produced a one-hour documentary, narrated by an ABC personality, and broadcast by both networks.

In addition to the production of special programs, there was increased visibility of the literacy issue through PSAs. Most conveners have been successful in creating PSAs, and PLUS helped them to feature local celebrities and other notable individuals. For example, in Maryland, two 30-second spots were produced by the Maryland Public Broadcasting System and also were aired by ABC. Other examples of such efforts are presented in Vignette No. 2.

Special challenges were presented to task forces serving rural areas. In some cases, media involvement centered on radio, as was the case for the task force in southeastern Iowa. In

Vignette No. 2

"ISN'T THAT WHAT'S HIS NAME?"

Public service announcements made for local PLUS task forces frequently feature local news anchor people. But other celebrities--known locally and nationally--also can be seen.

In Maine, a PSA featured a celebrity who is a familiar face to the local residents. Well-known actor Judd Nelson of the "Breakfast Club" returned to Maine to visit his mother, Merle Nelson, then chairperson of the Portland task force. One thing led to another, and Judd was seen on several PSAs taped for southern Maine's ABC affiliate. Another well-known figure, Robert Urich of "Spencer for Hire" fame, was in the state filming one of his series' programs. Task force members seized the opportunity, and the ABC affiliate produced a PSA featuring Urich.

National sports figures also were visible in supporting literacy programs. Football player Curtis Greer was featured in PSAs in St. Louis, and New England Patriots' quarterback Steve Grogan made personal appearances in southern New England. In Oregon, it was a group effort when several members of the Portland Trail Blazers basketball team attended a luncheon and taped several PSAs.

Speaking of celebrities, Barbara Bush stopped on her way through Macon, Georgia to tape two PSAs. While in Maine, she spoke at an event in Sanford and was filmed as part of the Maine PLUS effort.

these locations, the radio was effective vehicle for recruiting both learners and volunteers. Other task forces used posters and calendars to bring information about task force activities to outlying areas. Illustrative examples of these activities are presented in Vignette No. 3.

In addition to enhancing the task forces' involvement with the broadcast media, PLUS provided new opportunities for literacy service providers to work with the print media. Conveners noted that information about both task force events and literacy services was reported with increased frequency in newspapers. A number of newspapers, such as those in Bangor, Maine and Wichita, Kansas, published the "Learn to Read" lessons in conjunction with the television broadcast of the series.

Network Development. A critical component of task forces' awareness-raising activities was task force members' efforts to reach a variety of community organizations. Task forces varied in the extent to which they solicited community participation in task force events. Task forces comprised of primarily service providers, for example, all library programs, have tended to rely on their own resources in recruiting learners and volunteers rather than to utilize representatives of other organizations in the process. In contrast, conveners who are not service providers were more likely to reach out to the community and solicit broad-based participation by organizations. Examples of this situation are task forces that were organized by co-conveners, usually a service provider and a representative from the media or other community organization.

Approximately 15 percent of the task forces we studied had organized formal speakers' bureaus. However, all conveners reported that they routinely had given presentations about task force activities, and had encouraged task force members to do the same. The number of presentations increased as the campaign progressed.

Vignette No. 3

REACHING RURAL POPULATIONS

Some task forces have faced the problem of reaching far-flung, isolated populations, or of attempting to bring representatives from isolated areas into a coordinated task force effort.

In New York State's North Country, the task force encountered such a situation when the local communities' representatives on the task force made plans to celebrate the state's literacy month. Task force members felt it would be redundant for them to undertake an additional celebration, and overwork members already involved in local activities. Yet, the PLUS task force could not ignore a celebration of literacy.

The group's creative solution was to poll all the local communities to find what events were planned, and then to compile a calendar for monthly events--which was published in newspapers, newsletters, and brochures.

In Starkville, Mississippi, where there is no ABC affiliate nearby, radio is the medium used to deliver the literacy message. A local station runs regular literacy PSAs, and hosts interviews with the local PLUS task force convener. In this rural area, radio has been an effective tool for recruiting both volunteers and adult learners.

Special Events. Many of the task forces--especially those that evolved from existing literacy organizations--held special events to attract community attention to illiteracy, and to foster participation in task force activities. These events ranged from a country music concert sponsored by one task force, to banquets and breakfasts held for special interest groups and association members. In an effort to make the business community aware of illiteracy, conveners arranged presentations at the monthly meetings of Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis, and other organizations. For example, task force members from the Portland, Maine PLUS effort spoke at an "Issues and Eggs" breakfast meeting, sponsored by a local business association. Vignette No. 4 describes one task force's experience organizing a special event.

Summary

The awareness-raising activities undertaken by PLUS task forces resulted in greater visibility of the literacy issue in local communities, and in increased coverage of the problem by local media. Examples of this visibility included a growth in the numbers and types of PSAs broadcast, expanded coverage in print media, and increased production of special programs and documentaries on illiteracy. Task force members reached out to community members and solicited their involvement by sponsoring meetings and social activities designed to interest a variety of individuals. The impact of PLUS's awareness-raising efforts can be summarized in the words of one task force convener who said: "PLUS has made the job easier to undertake literacy activities; it has given these activities legitimacy and credibility, and has softened the community--especially the media. Initially we had to approach radio, television, and the newspapers about our illiteracy problem; now the media come to us."

Vignette No. 4

THE MEDIUM, THE MESSAGE, THE BOTTOM LINE

The faces of the members of the audience wore "looks of disbelief," according to one observer. The audience was made up of advertising people from a local organization, the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS). They were listening to a PLUS-sponsored panel of television and newspaper representatives at the PBS station in St. Louis.

The looks of disbelief came when they heard that many of the advertising messages they have created for television are lost for one-quarter of the viewing audience, who cannot read the written messages that appear on the screen. For these viewers, the medium carries only the message they can hear or see in pictures. Once the audience recovered from the shock of that statistic, they began to ask questions and then to offer their support to the local PLUS effort. This event was featured in the NATAS newsletter.

VI. COMMUNITY OUTREACH: BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Introduction

Central to the work of PLUS task forces have been their efforts to build linkages with diverse organizations in communities across the country. PLUS task force members were encouraged to establish relationships with groups not involved previously in literacy, as well as to solicit support from existing literacy service providers. The collaborative process has been a key component of all PLUS activities--from awareness raising to volunteer and adult learner recruitment.

This section of the report presents our findings about task forces' efforts to coalesce community support on behalf of the PLUS campaign. While many of these linkage-building activities were described in the sections of this report on awareness-raising and recruitment processes, the methods used to create and sustain collaborations, regardless of their focus, are highlighted in this discussion.

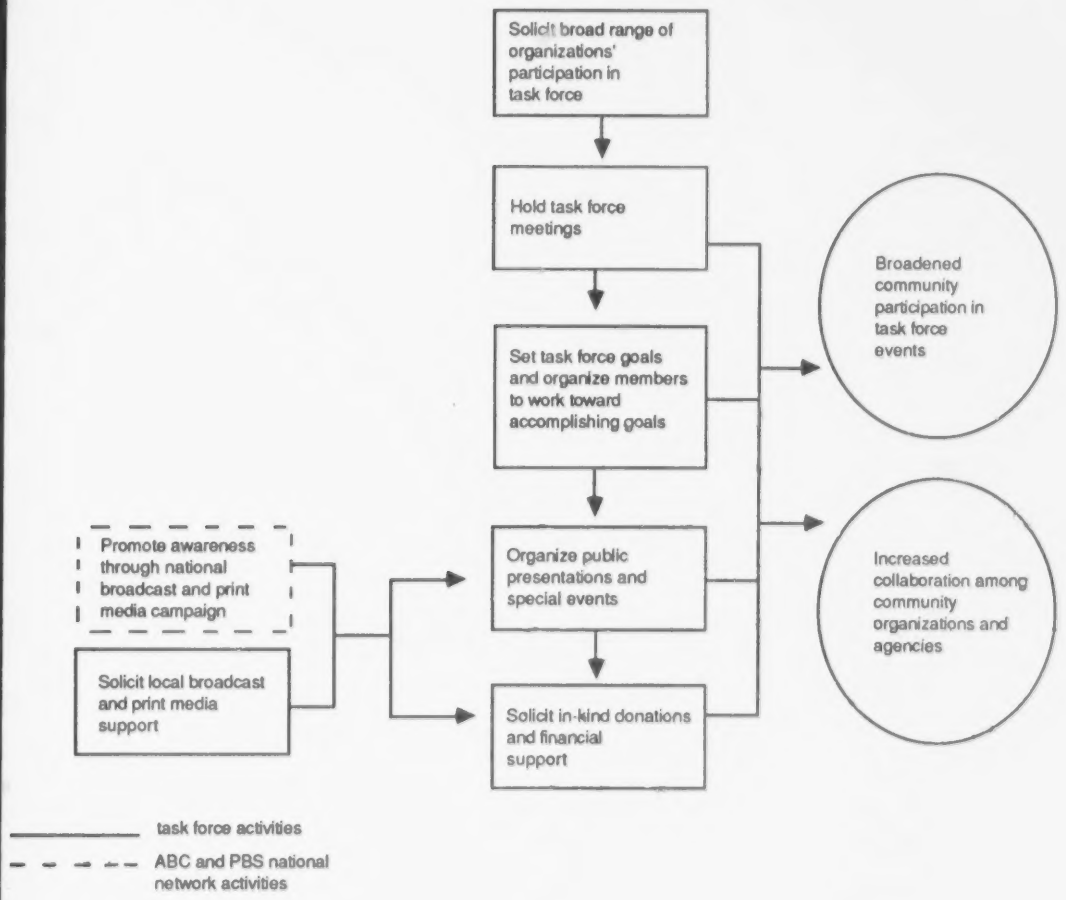
Task forces were encouraged to pursue a number of activities intended both to broaden and increase community participation in task force events. Presented in Figure 4 is a summary of the key activities performed by the majority of task forces we studied indepth, and the results they expected to achieve. Task forces' efforts at reaching these outcomes are described below.

Creating Structures

Organizational Form. Communities responded to PLUS's call for collaboration by creating different types of task force structures, and by using a variety of strategies to carry out task force work. Although three main task force models emerged--i.e., statewide, regional, or local--there were variations in the ways in which each model has developed. These developmental patterns were influenced, in part, by the existence of previous literacy efforts in an area, and by the extent to which state

Figure 4

FOSTERING COMMUNITY COLLABORATION: KEY ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES


Solicit broad range of organizations' participation in task force
Hold task force meetings
Set task force goals and organize members to work toward accomplishing goals
Organize public presentations and special events
Solicit in-kind donations and financial support
Promote awareness through national broadcast and print media campaign
Solicit local broadcast and print media support
Broadened community participation in task force events
Increased collaboration among community organizations and agencies
task force activities
ABC and PBS national network activities

agencies and national organizations have encouraged their local programs to participate in PLUS.

Of the 30 task forces we studied, the majority (60 percent) were local task forces. Some were created at the request of state agencies and were led by adult basic education program directors, such as in Appleton, Wisconsin, or by library program directors, such as those in the California. Other local task forces were organized by media representatives, as in Spokane, Washington, or by voluntary associations or community groups, as in Pensacola, Florida. The local task forces established in major metropolitan areas usually developed under the leadership of several organizational representatives. Another form of a local PLUS effort was the informal PLUS group, which supported and advised existing literacy organizations. While not as structured as formal task forces, these groups incorporated PLUS events into their own literacy activities.

In addition to the local task forces, 23 percent of the PLUS efforts we examined were regional models, and 17 percent were statewide task forces. The regional models cover a multi-county area, and generally have been led by representatives from a variety of literacy organizations. In some cases, regional task forces were organized in response to PLUS's request, as in the instance of Los Angeles, California. In other cases, they were self-initiated by an individual who perceived the need for an organized PLUS effort, as with the program in Beaumont, Texas.

Finally, the statewide task forces we studied, such as those in Rhode Island, Maryland, and Maine, were organized under a centralized leader, usually a state education department representative. Task forces chose this model for various reasons. For some, an existing statewide structure was in place, and with the advent of PLUS it seemed logical to expand the existing effort to focus on PLUS. For states covering relatively small geographical areas, it was feasible to direct all PLUS activity from one location.

Task Force Composition. A key aspect of linkage building was the enlistment of task force members from a variety of organizations. The task forces we examined differed in the extent to which their membership has reflected this desired diversity. Those that developed as new groups, directly in response to the PLUS campaign, initially focused on creating infrastructures and identifying their members. Most of these task force members came from education agencies, voluntary organizations, and the media--the groups most immediately affected by PLUS. The strategy here was to bring all literacy providers in a community together, in an attempt to create an environment of trust and understanding among those working with adult learners in need of literacy services. For many of these service providers, PLUS task force meetings were the first time that they had met with the other service providers in their community.

As the PLUS campaign developed during its first year, many of these task forces expanded their membership to include community and business representatives. With more diverse members, the challenge was to solidify the relationships among service providers, while generating new members' interest in task force activities. One task force's response to this challenge was to invite only service providers to the first hour of the task force meeting to allow them time to exchange information and coordinate activities. The remaining task force members joined the group during the second hour, during which time all task force members planned for upcoming PLUS events.

In other instances task forces were composed exclusively of one type of literacy service provider, with some representation from the media. Twenty-seven percent of the task forces we studied were in this category. Often these task forces consisted of either all adult basic education or all library literacy program staff, and determined that their primary purposes were to recruit volunteers and adult learners, and to provide adequate literacy programs. In these task forces, the media representa-

tives helped task force members in their outreach activities.

During the campaign's first year, the task forces that were successful in obtaining support from a wide variety of community groups were those that evolved from existing literacy organizations with community outreach components. With infrastructures in place, these task forces generated community support by building upon existing relationships and initiating new contacts. For example, the Jacksonville, Florida task force evolved from a group whose purpose had been to bring together organizations interested in literacy. With these literacy networks in place, the Jacksonville effort expanded their agenda to include the PLUS campaign's goals.

Fostering Collaboration

Types of Connections. Task force members established connections with a variety of national, state, and local organizations, as well as with business and industry. PLUS conveners and task force members asked representatives from these groups to: a) join the task forces, b) encourage their members and employees to volunteer, c) refer individuals in need to literacy services, and d) contribute to task force activities with both in-kind and financial resources.

PLUS's designers continued to urge national organizations to support the campaign, by encouraging their affiliates and chapters to work with local task forces. The conveners interviewed reported that local representatives of national groups, such as Altrusa, Junior League, and RSVP, asked their members to volunteer, helped to organize task force special events, and provided space for task force meetings. Conveners did note that while many of these national organizations made literacy a priority, the local affiliates and chapters did not necessarily organize their own activities to reflect the national office's priority. In these instances, task force members worked with local groups to identify activities that would be mutually beneficial.

Involvement in PLUS also was supported by various state agencies. A number of task force conveners indicated that they had applied for VISTA volunteers to work in local literacy programs. For example, the convener of Oregon's statewide task force worked cooperatively with Oregon Literacy, the state's Laubach Literacy program, to place VISTA volunteers in adult basic education and literacy programs across the state. These volunteers were effective in organizing literacy services at the adult basic education sites, and in providing additional assistance to existing literacy programs.

State agencies also encouraged their local offices to assess their clients' and employees' literacy problems, and to refer those in need of help to local service providers. Illustrative literacy efforts are those undertaken by the State Probation and Parole Office in St. Louis, Missouri, the Driver's License Examination Office in Creston, Iowa, and the Department of Public Works in Charleston, South Carolina. Presented in Vignette No. 5 are examples of collaborations between task forces and national and state groups.

In addition to working with national and state organizations, task force members contacted local groups to solicit their support for literacy activities. For example, 65 percent of the conveners we interviewed reported that their task forces had contacted the local Private Industry Council (PIC) to discuss literacy program development. Linkages also were established with local Councils of Government, as in Muscle Shoals, Alabama where the Council paid for the production of 22,000 PLUS brochures, and with professional associations, such as the Personnel Managers Association.

An emerging linkage-building activity were task force efforts to work with business and industry. As with the other collaborative activities, task forces varied in the extent of their involvement with businesses. Forty-seven percent of the conveners interviewed reported that their task forces had

Vignette No. 5

NOTABLE COLLABORATIONS

The goal of increasing collaboration among groups interested in combating illiteracy was accomplished by some local task forces in interesting ways.

Returning from her national convention where the Junior League adopted literacy as a priority for the organization, a Junior Leaguer in Omaha became a member of the task force. Later, she encouraged the convener to prepare a proposal for funding from the League. As a result, Junior League funding sponsored a two-year tutor training program in the Omaha area.

When PLUS began, the state of Maine didn't see any reason to install another hotline, when the Literacy Volunteers of America/Maine, in cooperation with the Maine Department of Educational and Cultural Services, already had one functioning. The collaborative effort was continued with LVA/ME staffing the hotline. Referrals were expanded to include Adult Basic Education, Literacy Volunteers of America, High School Diploma, and the GED. The State Education Department contributed additional resources for staff and office space, to compensate LVA/ME for the increased workload. If you call (800) 322-5455 in Maine, you'll hear "Adult Learning Opportunities."

Two sets of letters not usually joined together are ABE and DUI. But judges in Muscle Shoals, Alabama have noticed that repeat offenders for driving under the influence (DUI) are people who also have problems with basic literacy skills. Thus, these offenders sometimes find themselves sentenced to Adult Basic Education (ABE) instead of jail.

contacted business representatives and solicited their help with PLUS efforts. In approaching businesses, task forces found it effective to identify a task force supporter, who is part of the business and industry community or who holds an influential position in the community, and to ask this individual to make the contact. Thirty-seven percent of the conveners interviewed used this strategy.

Many corporations also announced their support for combating illiteracy. Task forces identified these companies and approached local offices and subsidiaries to solicit their help. In some cases, the local office was unaware of the corporate concern for literacy, while in others the corporate headquarters has suggested a range of literacy-related activities that could be pursued.

A number of task forces contacted their local Chambers of Commerce and asked their help in reaching local businesses. In some cities, this approach was successful, as is described in Vignette No. 6. Other task forces found it difficult to sustain Chamber members' interests in the illiteracy problem. However, this experience predated the announcement of PLUS II, with its "Literacy and the Workplace" emphasis.

Finally, during PLUS's first year a number of the task forces, such as those in Los Angeles, St. Louis, Philadelphia, Oregon, Maryland, and Rhode Island, sponsored business breakfasts or luncheons. These events were intended to introduce the business community to PLUS and the local illiteracy problem. Some of these events were co-sponsored by the PLUS task force and other literacy groups, while others were conducted under PLUS's auspices.

Task force members found the planning and organization of these events to be both challenging and frustrating. In planning them, members had to identify the target audience and obtain an accurate mailing list, which was often a difficult task. In an effort to attract the business community, task forces had prominent speakers at these events, such as Harold McGraw from the

Vignette No. 6

REACHING OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

A number of PLUS task forces focused their energies on eliciting support from community and business members. Special efforts have been made with the Chambers of Commerce across the country.

In Spokane, Washington, the task force's co-convener, a representative from the ABC affiliate, contacted the chairperson of the local Chamber and asked for his assistance in reaching Chamber members. As a result of this meeting, the co-convener sent over 100 letters to Chamber organizations, offering them the use of a video tape, which describes the local illiteracy problem and the available literacy services. Chamber officials responded very positively; in a month's time, the co-convener had received 15 requests for the video tape.

The Jacksonville, Florida, task force convener joined forces with the president of the community college to work with the local Chamber of Commerce. As a result of this effort, the Chamber set up a plan to reduce illiteracy in southeast Florida. A special committee at the Chamber has been formed to focus specifically on the illiteracy problem.

Business Council for Effective Literacy and Wally Amos from "Famous Amos's Cookies." Two task forces' experiences with their business luncheons are described in Vignette No. 7 and Vignette No. 8.

Sustaining Momentum. As PLUS progressed, task forces worked diligently to maintain their momentum. The conveners interviewed reported that the suggestions communicated through the PLUS teleconferences were very useful in guiding task force activities. Some task forces used these suggestions to direct their efforts, while others chose one or two goals of particular interest to the task force and pursued them.

Task force conveners experimented with the times and locations of task force meetings to determine the best arrangement for sustaining members' attendance. A favorite location for task force meetings has been the PBS or ABC stations. Conveners found the content of the meeting agenda to be an important factor in drawing members. As previously noted, the moderators of task force meetings had the challenge of encouraging service providers to undertake joint planning, while maintaining the interest of non-service provider members. One strategy used by task forces to maintain the support of non-service provider members was to ask them to speak before local community and business groups on behalf of the task force. Sometimes service providers teamed with non-service providers in making presentations--an effective technique for reaching heterogeneous audiences.

Finally, task forces continually sought new members who could assist with task force activities. A number of the conveners located in service-provider agencies, such as adult basic education programs, libraries, and voluntary organizations, reported that their dual responsibilities of organizing the task force's efforts and directing a literacy program were overwhelming at times. A few of these conveners began to share the convener role, while others shifted the responsibility to another task force member. Generally, task force conveners found ways to

Vignette No. 7

A GOOD EFFORT: A VALUABLE LESSON

"We'd like to write the story of the lessons we learned, so other task forces can benefit from our experience," one member of the Oregon Task Force said after the group's first effort at bringing business people to a seminar focused on workplace literacy.

The one-day conference, held in May 1987, consisted of a morning keynote address by the Business Council for Effective Literacy's founder, Harold McGraw, and afternoon workshops aimed at helping business leaders identify and address workplace literacy issues. The event was labeled both interesting and informative by the approximately 150 people who attended.

What then were the lessons learned from the event? The task force was disappointed in the turnout of business people and, in reviewing the event, pointed out some "morals" of their seminar experience. For the 2,000 invitations that were sent out, the task force should have provided RSVPs to anticipate attendance, and then follow-up with personal calls, where they had the contacts to do so.

In creating the invitation list, they might have sent invitations to executives at the wrong level; perhaps personnel managers may have been a more appropriate target group for a conference, than vice-presidents and presidents. Also, they tended to overlook small businesses, which might have been a responsive group.

Finally, a full-day workshop may have been too long for busy executives. A shorter event might have been better attended.

These are the lessons the Oregon Task Force learned, and they are determined to benefit from them. The task force has appointed a follow-up committee to call each participant to find out what level of representative was sent; the ways in which that business can become involved; and in what ways the task force and the business can establish an ongoing relationship.

Vignette No. 8

TALKING TO ANGELS AND CEOS:
APPROACHING BUSINESS IN RHODE ISLAND

A once-popular song asked, "How Do You Talk To An Angel?" In Rhode Island, the task force asked, "How do you talk to chief executive officers, and make them listen?" The answer was provided by the task force's co-convener, who is the state's Commissioner of Education. He took a CEO-to-CEO approach, making personal appointments with top executives in area businesses, and bringing them the message of PLUS and the needs of the local literacy campaign.

The message was restated and reinforced by a seminar held in June 1987, to which CEOs and other influential business people were invited. Hosted by Brown University, one of the Commissioner's contacts, the seminar attracted and brought together an audience of about 35 individuals to hear presentations by several major corporations that have established worksite education programs, including Polaroid, Health Tex Clothing, and Hasbro, Inc. Members of the audience were urged to assess their own needs for worksite literacy problems, identify the resources, and begin the process of developing a program.

How to you talk to an angel? Get another angel. How do you talk to a CEO? In Rhode Island, you get another CEO.

involve others when the workload became excessive.

Soliciting Support

Over the course of PLUS's first year, task forces increasingly spent more time generating both financial and in-kind services. During the task forces' developmental periods, their energies were directed toward bringing literacy service providers together, soliciting help from non-service provider organizations, and creating an environment that fostered communication and collaboration. When asked about their fund-raising activities, many of the conveners interviewed explained that fund raising initially had not been a high priority for them, especially for the task forces that brought first-time service providers together. In these situations, fund raising was viewed as a potentially divisive activity, because decisions would have to be made about how to distribute funds equitably. However, as the year progressed and task forces' needs for funding and other resources expanded, their attention became more focused on ways to generate these resources.

Financial Support. Task force members solicited funding from businesses, foundations, and state and local agencies. Fifty-three percent of the conveners interviewed indicated that they had asked businesses for financial contributions. In some instances, businesses gave donations that could be used by task forces at their discretion; in others, the contributors specified the way in which the funding was to be used, such as to purchase instructional materials or for tutor training.

Another method used to generate funding was through the submission of proposals to foundations and other groups. For example, 43 percent of the conveners we interviewed had prepared grant submissions for the Gannett Foundation's Challenge Grant Program and for the Urban Literacy Program. Many of these conveners reported that the proposal-preparation process provided a unique opportunity for task force members to work together and to

reach a consensus on a number of issues. Given that a major purpose of both of these grant programs was to promote collaboration, it would appear that the proposal process was a good first step. Interestingly, a couple of the task forces indicated that they had not been able to submit a well-organized proposal to Gannett, because of continuing turf issues among task force members. However, these conveners did feel that their groups had resolved their differences and would prepare proposals for the program's second year.

PLUS task forces also worked together to seek funding from state and local agencies. The entire Lubbock, Texas task force wrote a proposal that was submitted to the Texas Coordinating Board for the College and University System, for U.S. Department of Labor monies. At the local level, representatives from the Wichita, Kansas task force were successful in obtaining school board approval for funding to support adult basic education classes--the first time local monies had been allocated for this purpose.

In-Kind Contributions. Forty percent of the PLUS conveners interviewed indicated that their task forces had asked businesses and community organizations for in-kind contributions. The types of contributions given to task forces and literacy service providers varied, including space, equipment, materials, and professional services, such as accounting. For example, in Oregon the Code-A-Phone Corporation supplied equipment for Portland's hotline, which was located in the county library. In Santa Clara County, California the local task force convener, who directs the county's library program, prepared a brochure describing the roles that business and industry can play in combating illiteracy. A local business produced the brochure and assisted in distributing it to local industries.

Companies encouraged their employees to become tutors, and some granted them release time for this activity, as another form of an in-kind contribution. Corporate space also was provided

for task force meetings and for tutoring sessions and instructional classes. Presented in Vignette No. 9 are examples of donations and services that were given to PLUS task forces across the country.

Summary

The PLUS task forces approached the linkage-building process with determination and creativity. For many of the task forces, each overture made to an organization provided a new challenge and experience. Gradually, task forces learned how to sustain the interest of a core group of members and solicit the participation of individuals from new organizations and businesses.

As PLUS's first year progressed, task forces expanded their fund-raising activities, and became more proactive in seeking both financial and in-kind resources. As the relationships among task force members who are service providers became more secure, it was more feasible for these groups to pursue fundraising activities.

The combination of these efforts resulted in increased collaboration, both among task force members and between the task force and outside groups. These efforts included new activities to involve business, industry, and local government in supporting the task forces' goals.

Vignette No. 9

CREATIVE DONATIONS

For many local task forces, raising funds is a goal, and usually a challenge. Task forces have been successful in obtaining donations and in-kind services that have proved to be very valuable. Examples of these are:

- In Grand Junction, Colorado, a local bank donated office space for the convener, so that the task force could have a headquarters and telephone service;
- In Pensacola, Florida, a civic group offered both space to house the hotline and their own volunteers to answer the calls;
- A Rhode Island bank hosted a gala banquet for volunteer tutors who had completed training. A local business in Alabama financed an entire GED graduation ceremony and reception;
- In Macon, Georiga, a major newspaper sponsored a music festival for the task force and raised $1,500 selling T-shirts and concession items;
- In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Cigna Corporation funded the production of a catalog of service providers, which is updated quarterly; and
- Perhaps the most creative donation occurred in Colorado, where the convener, a retired business man, and his wife donated themselves by becoming trained as VISTA volunteers this spring. They were placed with the local library's literacy program.

VII. RECRUITMENT AND LITERACY SERVICES

Introduction

PLUS's ultimate goal was to increase the numbers of volunteers and adult learners who have opportunities to participate in literacy services. Task forces supported this goal in differing ways, depending upon the composition of their members and the priorities they set. For task forces composed predominately of service providers, recruitment and service delivery activities received primary attention during the campaign's first year. Task forces with a more diversified membership consisting of representatives from businesses, community organizations, and service providers, focused both on collaboration-building and on recruiting volunteers and adult learners.

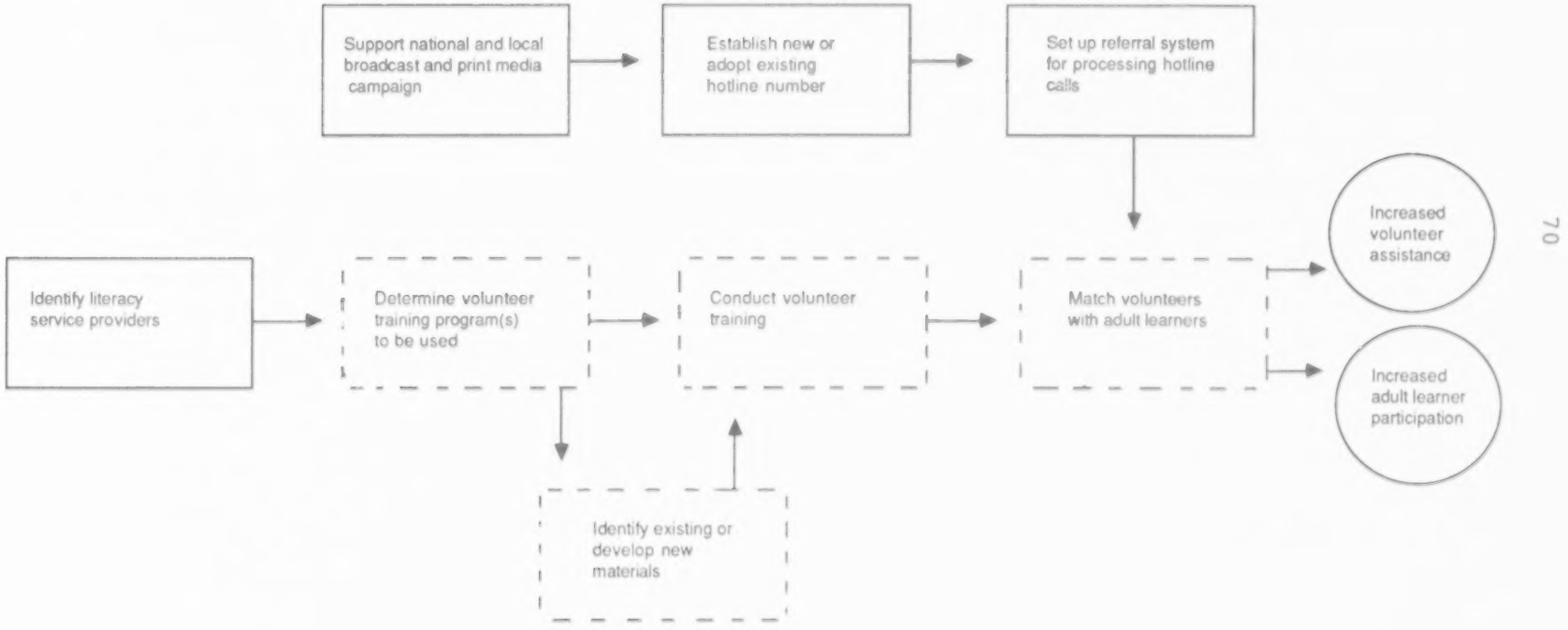
This section of the report describes our findings about task forces' recruitment and service delivery efforts. As with the other PLUS goals, task forces were encouraged to perform activities that would result in increased volunteer assistance and adult learner participation. These activities and their outcomes are depicted in Figure 5. Some of the activities in the figure were performed by service providers, independently or as part of a task force. The other activities are those undertaken by task forces to support service providers' efforts.

Recruiting Volunteers and Adult Learners

All of the task forces we studied in depth have supported PLUS's national campaign by organizing a variety of special events, as well as print and broadcast media activities. Through the sponsorship of literacy programs and presentations, task force members worked assiduously to attract volunteers, adult learners, and task force supporters. One strategy was for task forces to hold literacy functions in public places, such as sponsored reading marathons. In organizing marathons, task force members collaborated with the local media, businesses, and

Figure 5

VOLUNTEER AND ADULT LEARNER RECRUITMENT: KEY ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES


Support national and local broadcast and print media campaign
Establish new or adopt existing hotline number
Set up referral system for processing hotline calls
Identify literacy service providers
Determine volunteer training program(s) to be used
Conduct volunteer training
Match volunteers with adult learners
Increased volunteer assistance
Increased adult learner participation
Identify existing or develop new materials
task force activities
activities undertaken by service providers, independently or as part of task force

community representatives. As an added attraction, one task force asked local published authors to read during the event. In many areas, the marathons were combined recruitment and fund-raising activities. Task forces found special events, such as marathons, to be effective in broadening the community's awareness about illiteracy and in recruiting learners and volunteers. For example, based on the results of its first marathon, one task force planned a second event for the next year, and disseminated the activity to other local task forces within the state. Described in Vignette No. 10 are two task forces successes in organizing reading marathons.

A key component of the recruitment process was the creation of a hotline and referral system for volunteers and learners. All of the conveners we interviewed developed capacities to receive calls and direct volunteers and learners to services. Task force members were creative in publicizing their hotlines, in order to reach potential volunteers and learners from a cross-section of their communities. Thus, hotline numbers were placed on balloons, grocery bags, and payroll checks--in efforts to reach the campaign's target population. Illustrated in Vignette No. 11 are examples of task forces' creative efforts in disseminating hotline numbers.

As the PLUS campaign progressed, task force members refined their referral processes. During the early months of the campaign, a number of task forces recruited representatives from the media and other organizations to staff the phonebanks, which were set up after the nationally-broadcast literacy documentaries. Their objective was to respond to callers to encourage them to pursue literacy services. After these initial media events, the majority of task forces developed systems for referring learners appropriately and equitably so that referrals would not be made exclusively to one service provider. In some instances, an adult basic education program worked with a library program or voluntary literacy service provider to sponsor a joint

Vignette No. 10

READING FOR FUN AND PROFIT

A first annual Reading Marathon was held in Portland, Maine, in June 1987. Maine authors, reading from their own works, and community leaders, reading from other authors, were sponsored by donations from friends, businesses, and service clubs. The event, which lasted from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., combined raising awareness with raising funds. The Reading Marathon was hosted by local TV personalities and featured live music, a book sale, and a raffle. It's not too late to attend a Maine Reading Marathon; the second annual marathon is already in the planning stages for 1988.

A shopping mall in San Jose, California, was the setting for a Reading Day, which was held in March 1987. The Santa Clara PLUS task force hosted the event, along with the local Reading Council, County Office of Education, and the ABC affiliate. The local McDonalds provided food and gift certificates, and local literacy service providers had booths throughout the mall. Participants in the Reading Day included family members, and community and business representatives from the Silicon Valley. The highlight of the day was a special program conducted by the Cartoonists Across America.

Vignette No. 11

CARRYING THE MESSAGE

Every task force has sought to make its message known. A variety of methods have been used by task forces to inform the community about the illiteracy problem, with some positive results.

The hotline number was carried on welfare, unemployment, and state payroll checks in Missouri; on grocery bag "stuffers" in Colorado; and in St. Louis, where the task force really got "carried away," the number was on balloons that were exchanged for donations at a local parade.

In Evansville, Indiana the convener sent out a fact sheet full of brief messages that local businesses could choose to carry on their marquees. During the Fall of 1986, 45 local marquees in the Evansville area carried eye-opening messages, such as "Millions of people in the U.S. can't read."

In case the people of Evansville missed the message on the marquees above them, they could find them on the grocery bags in front of them. In an effort to let people know that volunteers can provide babysitting and transportation services, as well as tutoring, informative grocery sacks carried a message that began, "If tutoring is not your bag..."

hotline and referral process. State education departments and state libraries supported the development of hotlines through grants to their local services. Vignette No. 12 describes one task force's experiences with the referral process.

The various recruitment efforts undertaken by task forces were effective in generating volunteers and adult learners. Generally, more tutors than adult learners came forward during the campaign's first year. Eighty percent of the conveners interviewed reported that the service providers on their task forces had experienced increases in volunteers, while 67 percent said that the numbers of learners seeking services had expanded. Conveners thought that, in many instances, it was predictable that the response by adult learners would lag behind that of volunteers, given that it is often a difficult step for an adult to enroll in a literacy program.

The response pattern was somewhat different in the urban areas we examined. Conveners from these task forces reported that, for the most part, PLUS helped to increase the numbers of learners seeking adult basic education and literacy programs. While most adult basic education programs in these areas had waiting lists of prospective learners for some time, especially adults wanting instruction in English as a second language, the advent of PLUS exacerbated this situation. Thus, in some cities PSAs with the hotline number were not shown for periods of time, because of the overwhelming reponse to them. In addition to increases in participants in adult basic education classes, conveners also indicated that the numbers of native-born adults requesting literacy services have expanded.

Training and Managing Volunteers

One result of PLUS's impact on literacy services across the country has been a need for expanded capacities for training tutors and for managing programs. The national offices of the major voluntary organizations, Laubach Literacy and Literacy

Vignette No. 12

LEADING FROM STRENGTH IN OREGON

In the game of Contract Bridge, leading from a strong suit often results in winning the game. The same strategy proved to be successful for the Oregon Task Force, when the members "led from" strength to create a winning television recruitment effort.

First, the public affairs coordinator for the Portland ABC affiliate produced a live broadcast called "Illiteracy, the Silent Nightmare," which was shown on the station's award-winning local affairs program, "Town Hall." This program, an awareness-raising effort, was simulcast on the PBS station.

Immediately following the program, ABC viewers were asked to tune their sets to the PBS station, where they saw a follow-up segment to the ABC program called "Project Literacy, Your Turn," which was aimed at recruitment.

In this segment, the PBS station, under the guidance of PLUS task force members and the PBS volunteer coordinator, contributed its greatest strength--a corps of volunteers to answer the familiar bank of telephones for recruiting volunteers and adult learners. The volunteers had received training from task force members, who are service providers, on how to respond to callers' questions and how to give appropriate information. The service providers also developed the referral form used by the telephone volunteers to record the calls.

The result? In a half-hour timespan, the station received 650 calls--about two-thirds of them from prospective tutors, the other one-third from students. According to the volunteer coordinator, that was the maximum number of calls that could be received in that time by the available volunteers.

Volunteers of America, have responded to this need by producing new materials and updating existing training programs that can be used by their local affiliates and programs. The 14 conveners we interviewed, who are direct providers of services, reported that while training efforts have expanded, there is still a great need for more systematic and comprehensive tutor training and program management.

Training Issues. The task force conveners identified a number of training issues that emerged with literacy program expansion. Most of the literacy programs we examined had a training program in place prior to the onset of the PLUS campaign. The types of training materials directors use varied according to the tutoring method adopted by the program. For example, the majority of Laubach programs we studied prepared their tutors using a variant of the prescribed Laubach training. The amount of variation depended, in part, on the staff that was available, and the extent to which the local program has utilized resources and expertise provided by the national office.

Literacy programs without a training component had to either design a new program or adopt an existing model. Some literacy program directors have solved their training needs by using elements of exisiting programs that appear to be philosophically and methodologically consistent with their perspectives.

Generally, conveners who are service providers reported that there is a need to increase the amount of training given to volunteer tutors--an issue that has been difficult for literacy program directors because of volunteers' limited time availability. Conveners felt that the volunteer tutors' capacities could be enhanced if additional training was offered. Literacy programs also had difficulty expanding their training capacities to meet the increased numbers of volunteers, due to limited financial resources and staff capability to conduct the training. State education departments and other groups increasingly have supported voluntary literacy programs with grants to cover training costs and materials.

Program Management. As literacy services have expanded, so have the needs for program coordination and management. A number of the conveners reported that the demographic composition of volunteers has been more varied since PLUS began--one indicator that the media campaign has stimulated the interests of a broad segment of the population. However, one problem that ensued with this diversity is overcommitment of some volunteers who, upon becoming tutors, do not realize the amount and level of commitment that is required to be successful. In response to this situation, literacy program directors spent more time in orienting new volunteers, in order to convey a realistic picture of a tutor's responsibilities. This step also was taken in order to increase tutor retention rates.

Another aspect of program management that has arisen concerns documentation of tutor activity. Fifty percent of the service providers we interviewed maintain records on the numbers of tutors that have been trained, while 30 percent track tutors' activities. Many volunteer programs do not have a paid coordinator, or the coordinator works part time, which has limited the amount of program management that can be undertaken. Service providers reported that it would be helpful if more tutor follow up could be conducted, so that problems in a tutoring relationship could be identified early enough to resolve them.

A final component of literacy program management that has changed since PLUS has been the matching of adult learners with volunteers. Providers reported that, increasingly, they have had mismatch situations, in which the geographical availability of tutors has not matched that of adult learners. Providers have had to determine ways of responding to the needs of learners and volunteers, while managing logistics. These management issues provided challenges for literacy program coordinators, as they dealt with the demands being placed on their programs.

Providing Literacy Services

Local communities responded to the need generated as a result of PLUS, by both expanding existing literacy services and establishing new programs. While the numbers of adults coming forward to participate in literacy programs was not as great as the numbers of tutors, it still was necessary to expand the capacities of existing programs to serve the new learners.

This impact was felt by all types of programs including voluntary literacy services, library literacy programs, and adult basic education centers. The patterns of service delivery began to change in these programs, in part due to their needs to serve more learners. For example, a number of adult basic education programs began to use volunteers to assist in instruction and classroom management. While volunteers had been utilized in some of these programs for a number of years, the practice expanded during PLUS's first year.

Another service delivery issue that became more pressing with PLUS is the need to have an articulated basic education system. In such a system, an adult learner could progress from a tutoring program to adult basic education instruction to a high school completion program. As the numbers of adult learners at all skill levels increased, the need for this type of system became more apparent. For example, voluntary literacy and library programs began to work with adult basic education programs in cross referral of students. The PLUS task force facilitated this collaboration through the discussions that took place among service providers at task force meetings. This cooperation was a good first step. However, more work is needed if an articulated system is to become a reality. Attention should be given to staff training and the development of placement and assessment instruments, such as the efforts that are underway in California's library literacy programs to track and assess learners. Presented in Vignette No. 13 are examples of collaborative service delivery efforts that were undertaken by

Vignette No. 13

REACHING ADULT LEARNERS

An important outcome of PLUS has been its effect on the provision of literacy services across the country. In some communities the campaign enhanced efforts that were underway; in others, it served as an impetus for the creation of new services.

In Starkville, Mississippi, the task force convener, as director of community education, has responsibility for all phases of programming, including literacy instruction, adult basic education classes, and the GED program. As a result of PLUS awareness efforts, the volunteer tutoring segment of the program has more than doubled. A new tutor training program has been established, which emphasizes tutor support, along with the training.

A key feature of this program is the service that it provides in facilitating the adult learner's participation in different program components. After learners have completed the literacy instruction phase of the program, they are referred to the appropriate adult basic education class. This program structure provides continuity for learners and encourages their ongoing participation in the educational programs.

The Fox Valley Institute in Wisconsin, the home of the PLUS task force, takes a similar approach to service provision. Before PLUS, volunteers were not a part of the ABE. The task force now recruits and trains volunteers, and provides alternative programs for them to join as tutors, one of which is the Fox Valley Institute ABE program. The addition of tutors to the ABE program has strengthened the connection between volunteers and the formal instructional program, as well as encouraged adult learners to seek further instruction.

PLUS task force members.

Finally, business and industry involvement in literacy service delivery has expanded since the beginning of PLUS. The task force conveners interviewed indicated that local companies have recruited tutors, provided space for literacy classes and, in some instances, have began workplace literacy programs. For example, the New Jersey statewide task force worked with the State Department of Education in an initiative to involve the corporate world in providing tutors. The idea for the initiative came from a task force member and representative from New Jersey Bell, who persuaded the company to encouage its employees to become volunteers. As a result, 80 tutors were recruited, and the Department of Education funded the Literacy Volunteers of America affiliate to provide training and match the tutors with learners. Based on the results of Bell's experience, other local companies instituted similar programs.

Summary

The PLUS campaign's goal of attracting volunteers and adult leaners was realized in communities across the country. Task force members worked with local service providers in recruitment activities and in expanding service capacities. With the increases in volunteers and adult learners wishing to participate in literacy programs, a number of issues emerged concerning the training and management of volunteers, and the facilitation of adult learners' educational development.

In response to these issues, programs began to collaborate in referring learners and in delivering services. The progress that has made is encouraging; however, more efforts are needed to develop an articulated basic education system that can serve the needs of all adults wanting to improve their basic skills.

VIII. LESSONS LEARNED: PLUS II AND BEYOND

The previous three sections of this report described our findings concerning task forces' efforts to accomplish the three major goals of the PLUS campaign. Briefly, we found that:

- PLUS task forces' work with local print and broadcast media increased the public's recognition of illiteracy and has enhanced the visibility of literacy service providers;
- Through task forces' activities, representatives from education, business, labor, government, social services, religious organizations, and the media were encouraged to work together to combat illiteracy; and
- Task forces' recruitment efforts resulted in increased numbers of volunteers and adult learners participating in adult literacy services.

In addition, task forces' activities helped to increase state agencies' support for literacy, encourage development of new literacy services, and promote higher education institutions' participation in literacy programs. Thus, the PLUS campaign provided a unique opportunity for individuals from different sectors of communities to work together to solve the illiteracy problem.

This section presents our conclusions, or lessons learned, about task forces' developmental experiences and the activities they undertook in support of the PLUS campaign. Also discussed are task forces' early efforts with PLUS II, based on our interviews with task force conveners conducted during the summer of 1987. Finally, we present recommendations about literacy policy and practice issues that should be considered by policymakers, practitioners, and politicians, as the PLUS campaign moves forward.

A. Lessons Learned

Our analyses of the PLUS task forces' first-year activities revealed a variety of strategies and conditions that the different types of task forces found helpful in achieving their goals, as well as some of the barriers they encountered. While task forces were organized according to different geographical and organizational models, no one task force model, or set of specific practices, appears to be ideal. Rather, a variety of organizational models and strategies were implemented successfully. Presented below are the lessons we learned about task force organization and operation; the recruitment of volunteers and adult learners; and the provision of literacy services.

Organizing a Task Force

The PLUS task forces we studied were viable mechanisms for coalescing community support to combat the illiteracy problem. Our findings indicated that task forces are likely to develop differently, depending upon their origin, membership, and form of leadership. The developmental patterns that can be expected are:

- A task force formed as a new group specifically for PLUS will spend its initial months building an infrastructure and determining how its members can work together. Task force members' internal relationships must become solidified before the task force can diversify its membership, and work with outside groups;

- A task force formed from an existing group, such as local literacy coalition, will most likely be part of an existing network of literacy organizations. Through this network, a task force has the contacts necessary to begin forming collaborative relationships with a variety of community groups;

- A task force whose membership consists primarily of literacy service providers, especially from one delivery system, is likely to focus initially on awareness-raising, recruitment, and service-delivery activities, rather than on developing linkages with non-service provider organizations. These types of task forces found it useful to have a non-service provider convener, who can mediate the vested interests of the various service providers;

- Task force conveners are more likely to spend significant amounts of time on task force activities when their jobs relate directly to the literacy issue. Conveners not directly involved in literacy find it difficult to devote time to task force efforts. An effective leadership model is one in which a task force is led by co-conveners, one service provider and one non-service provider, such as a representative from the media; and

- Task forces that have difficulty becoming organized often have conveners who have multiple commitments and who do not have administrative support to work on PLUS. Conveners only marginally interested in the literacy issue often do not develop a task force agenda with members, or build consensus on a set of goals. If there is a not a task force mission and corresponding activities, members are likely to lose interest in participating in the task force.

Building Collaboration

Task forces employed a variety of strategies in reaching out to the community, in order to expand task force membership and to solicit support for task force activities. Two strategies that proved to be effective are:

- Systematic planning for special events. In organizing an event to solicit business and community involvement in task force activities, members should identify the event's target audience, obtain an accurate mailing list, and follow up before the event to ensure a high attendance rate. It is helpful to a key community or business representative sponsor the event by sending invitations under his/her name. During the event, specific suggestions should be given to the audience as to how they can become involved in PLUS. After the event has taken place, task force members should call those who attended to encourage their involvement and to provide additional information; and

- Conducting well-organized task force meetings. In order to keep task force members, particularly those who are not service providers, engaged in task force activities, task force meetings should be well organized and directed toward the task force audience. For example, members should receive the agenda prior to meetings and issues discussed during meetings should interest all members, particularly representatives from business and the community. Non-service provider members are more likely to assist with task force a tivities if the activities relate in some way to their organizations' interests.

Recruiting Volunteers and Adult Learners

Task forces experimented with numerous recruitment strategies in an effort to encourage volunteer and adult learner participation in literacy services. These strategies included the use of print and broadcast media, as well as the organization of special events and presentations. The efforts were initiated by task force members, as well as by representatives from the local media and community. Some illustrative strategies are the following:

- The broadcast of radio PSAs and the posting of notices of task force events in public places are useful strategies for reaching geographically-dispersed populations;

- Task forces composed of a variety of literacy providers should include information about all service providers in their recruitment materials. This step helps to build relationships among service deliverers and provides potential adult learners with options for services;

- Printed recruitment materials have limited use in reaching adults with deficiencies in their literacy skills. Methods incorporating non-print media are more likely to be successful; and

- Both potential volunteers and adult learners respond favorably to recruitment materials that are "personalized" to the local community. PSAs featuring local celebrities and newspaper articles that highlight volunteer and adult learner experiences are effective techniques.

Providing Literacy Services

Existing literacy services expanded and new programs were developed as a result of the PLUS literacy campaign. Directors of these services--from voluntary organizations, libraries, religious organizations, and adult basic education programs--were challenged both to use volunteers and to serve adult learners effectively. Service providers found that:

- Volunteer retention rates increase when volunteers are properly oriented to the responsibilities involved in tutoring; are trained adequately; and are provided feedback and reinforcement on their activities;

- Volunteers can provide a variety of services, including tutoring, re-

cruitment, classroom management, and program administration. These services require differing levels of expertise and time commitments, and can be customized to the needs of the program; and

- The referral of adult learners to literacy services is facilitated by the dissemination of accurate information about local services, such as the types and structure of the services, the times they are offered, and the types of instruction that are provided.

B. PLUS II: Early Efforts

As PLUS II was announced in April 1987, task forces across the country were in the process of deciding how they would proceed. The promise of a second year of the campaign, with commitments from Capital Cities/ABC and PBS, helped to assure that local print and broadcast media would continue their involvement in combating illiteracy. Task forces had established procedures for working together, were reflecting over the past year's experiences, and were thinking about what needed to be done to sustain momentum.

Task Force Continuation

When we conducted our follow-up interviews with task force conveners during the summer of 1987, most (67 percent) of them reported that their task forces were planning to continue in the same form. A few (7 percent) said that their task forces would become incorporated into another literacy group, while others (23 percent) indicated that their task forces would change their form significantly. Only three percent reported that their task forces would discontinue. Conveners felt that their task forces had managed to pursue their own agendas, which involved working toward both PLUS's goals and their own, and to establish cooperative working relationships among task force members. Conveners who initially had difficulties organizing task forces had developed strategies to overcome these difficulties. These strategies usually involved obtaining the support of a prominent community member to assist in organizing the task force, and finding ways to involve representatives from different organizations, such as the media, in task force activities.

Task forces progressed as working groups in several ways. One example was the planning processes used by task forces in preparing for the October PLUS Business Breakfast. At the time of our interviews, half of the task forces had decided to hold a

local business breakfast in October, and were in the initial stages of organizing the event. Several conveners indicated that task force members had decided to customize the event to their own needs. Thus, they were considering options such as holding a lunch or dinner instead of a breakfast, and scheduling it on or near October 21, the nationally scheduled date. Some task forces were going to sponsor speakers at the fall meeting of the local business association, rather than organize a formal event. Task forces' growth was evident in their planning for the breakfasts; they had matured as a group, so that they knew their audience and the best approach for reaching this audience. This planning was different than the experiences of several task force members a year ago.

Considerations for PLUS II

With PLUS II came some concerns about the changing focus of the campaign and what will happen after the second year. Conveners thought that with the multiple themes for PLUS II, the original focus of the campaign--recruiting volunteers and adult learners--might be diverted. In many areas of the country, the numbers of adults requesting literacy services had just begun to increase. The conveners did not want to lose the momentum generated by PLUS's first year.

Thus, as the fall of 1987 approached, task force members were grappling with how to maintain their progress in recruitment, while embracing PLUS's new themes. They also were considering which elements of the task force should remain over time, and which should cease as the focus of the media campaign shifted.

C. Beyond PLUS: Recommendations for Policy and Practice

A major accomplishment of the PLUS campaign's first year was to bring a wide range of community members together on the single issue of adult illiteracy. As we look beyond PLUS and consider what was achieved during the first year, and what still needs to be done, several issues arise concerning literacy policy and practice that warrant consideration by policymakers, practitioners, and politicans.

In presenting recommendations about these issues, we made two assumptions. First, that it is important to encourage adults to complete their basic education and pursue further training. Second, that high quality literacy and basic education programs should be made available to adults wishing to participate in these programs.

The following are our recommendations for the issues that must be addressed if literacy policy and practice are to be responsive to the needs of adults.

Policy Recommendations

PLUS has helped to stimulate national, state, and local concern about the availability of literacy, basic education, and job training programs in this country. The U.S. Department of Labor has joined the U.S. Department of Education in establishing an initiative to focus on literacy training and education needs. Several state legislatures incorporated language about the provision of literacy services into their legislation. In spite of the progress that is being made, additional steps need to be taken to ensure that adults with limited literacy skills can access the education and training that they need. Three recommendations that should be considered are:

1. National organizations should work together to develop mechanisms for disseminating information about effective literacy programs and

instructional practices. Local task forces should be encouraged to continue their work in promoting collaboration, particularly in the identification and transfer of information about literacy programs and practices;

2. Funding should be provided for the development of new processes and materials for adult literacy instruction and assessment. As well, additional research is needed to build our knowledge base about methods to use in combating adult illiteracy; and

3. A process should be instituted for promoting ongoing communication among local, state and national leaders in literacy. Continual information sharing among leaders is critical if our overall system for providing literacy services is to be improved.

Practice Recommendations

The increases in volunteers and adult learners participating in literacy programs have exacerbated the need for systematic training of instructional personnel and delivery of literacy services. In addition, as the numbers of participants in literacy programs increased, so have those requesting basic education services and high school diploma programs. Two recommendations are made concerning the improvement of practice.

1. Systematic training and technical assistance should be available to all literacy providers, including volunteers and paid staff. Training programs that are both comprehensive and cost efficient need to be developed. It is critical that training and technical assistance be ongoing and reflect state-of-art knowledge, so that quality services can be provided; and

2. Efforts should be made to facilitate articulation among the major service delivery systems: literacy, basic education, and high school diploma programs. Adults should have opportunities to move from one program to another, as their skills increase and their needs expands.

Final Thoughts

The PLUS media campaign has drawn unprecendented national attention to the literacy crisis and to the resources that are available to combat it. In addition to stimulating public awareness about literacy, PLUS has brought organizations in communities together, through task forces, to work in new collaborative relationships.

As first steps toward enhancing the quality and quantity of literacy services, these efforts must be expanded to meet the increasing needs of all segments of society. While the media campaign has provided legitimacy to the literacy problem and has generated interest in combating it, the challenge now is left to local, state, and national organizations to build effective mechanisms for addressing the problem.

PART B: CASE STUDIES

I. CASE STUDIES: PLUS TASK FORCES IN PERSPECTIVE

I. CASE STUDIES: PLUS TASK FORCES IN PERSPECTIVE

The task forces examined in this evaluation are illustrative of a variety of community efforts that were initiated in support of the PLUS campaign. This variety is manifested in the differences in the geographical areas served by task forces, in the organizational affiliations of their members and leadership, and in the activities their members have performed on behalf of PLUS. The task forces also demonstrated a diversity of approaches that can be used to stimulate community participation in combating a social and educational problem, such as illiteracy.

In order to highlight specific strategies undertaken by task forces to accomplish the campaign's goals, five task forces were examined in depth; these case studies are presented in this section of the report. Representative of local, regional, and statewide PLUS models, the five task forces are illustrative examples of effective PLUS efforts. While each task force used different techniques in following the guidelines set by PLUS, each also has encountered difficulties in maintained a sustained effort, in coalescing community support, and in recruiting volunteers and adult learners. The creative strategies used by task forces to overcome barriers, as well as their successes in pursuing PLUS's goals, are described in the case studies.

Since the case studies are designed to illustrate the ways in which community task forces were organized to support PLUS, each description covers the same set of topics. These topics are: 1) task force development, 2) related literacy efforts, 3) task force organization and operation, 4) awareness-raising activities, 5) community participation, 6) volunteer and adult learner recruitment, and 7) impact on service provision. Thus, the case studies are intended to portray various ways in which PLUS task forces developed during the first year of PLUS, and the activities they pursued in response to the national media campaign.

II. BEAUFORT COUNTY PLUS TASK FORCE

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Context

The PLUS campaign in South Carolina was a joint effort of the State Department of Education's Office of Adult Education, the South Carolina Literacy Association, and the South Carolina Educational Television Network. At the request of the Office of Adult Education, ABE program directors across South Carolina convened local task forces to coordinate PLUS awareness and outreach activities. During PLUS's first year nine task forces were formed, and task force members worked with local literacy program directors, media representatives, and community members to strengthen statewide efforts to address the illiteracy problem.

The Beaufort County task force, based in the county seat of Beaufort, serves both Beaufort and Jasper Counties. This two-county area, which is predominantly rural, includes resort islands, such as Hilton Head, and three military bases. As one of South Carolina's economic growth areas, Beaufort County portrays a picture of contrasts--from the native island residents to retired professionals--who have migrated from other states.

The national PLUS campaign helped to focus new attention on the area's illiteracy problem, and provided an impetus for the Beaufort County Adult Basic Education program and the local Literacy Association to join forces in urging the community's support in the campaign against illiteracy.

Task Force Development

The Beaufort County task force was formed in April 1986, as part of the Charleston area PLUS effort. In designing the state's PLUS campaign, the State Department of Education's Director of Adult Education selected regional areas as the geographic boundaries for the task forces. The ABE directors in Beaufort and Charleston (considered the Charleston area) were asked to

serve as co-conveners of the area task force. It was envisaged that the two directors would undertaken separate activities in their respective counties, as well as joint activities when possible. Since the ABC affiliate for the area was located in Charleston, some combined efforts were initiated in conjunction with the affiliate.

In Beaufort, the ABE director, serving as convener, asked the Beaufort County Literacy Association's coordinator and Board of Directors to assist him in creating a local task force for Beaufort and Jasper Counties. The Literacy Association, a non-profit agency funded by the ABE program and the United Way, had been the primary literacy service provider in the two-county area. The Charleston ABE director focused his task force efforts in Charleston, Dorchester, and Berkeley Counties. Working with the tri-county area Chamber of Commerce, the ABE director solicited the participation of key business leaders in the Charleston area to support the PLUS effort. Chamber members were requested to participate in the ongoing literacy activities of the local Literacy Association and the ABE program, and to develop strategies for community outreach.

In May 1986, the State Department of Education's Office of Adult Education held a meeting of statewide PLUS task force conveners to initiate formally the PLUS effort. Under the leadership of the ABE program directors, task forces across South Carolina began their media awareness and outreach development activities in conjunction with the national PLUS campaign. As PLUS progressed, the Beaufort and Charleston efforts evolved into two independent task forces, in part because the localized needs of each area required different approaches and foci. As well, the original plan for the two task forces to undertake joint activities with the Charleston ABC affiliate seemed less feasible, when the task force conveners ascertained that Beaufort's television viewers watched the ABC affiliate in Savannah, Georgia, rather than the one in Charleston. Another important

factor was the existence in Beaufort of one of the state's four Educational Television (ETV) Network stations. The Beaufort convener thought it would be more beneficial for the task force to concentrate its media awareness efforts with the ETV station, since direct work with the ABC affiliate in Savannah was prohibited because of state boundaries.

Related Literacy Efforts

The PLUS campaign in South Carolina is set against a backdrop of literacy efforts that date back to 1918, when the state's first literacy commission was appointed by the Governor. The ongoing activities of the State's Adult Basic Education program were bolstered in 1980 with the creation of the South Carolina Adult Reading Campaign, a collaborative effort between the State Department of Education and the South Carolina Literacy Association. Since its inception, the Adult Reading Campaign has served as an impetus for local school districts to form cooperative agreements with local literacy councils in training literacy tutors, and in providing volunteer tutoring services to non-readers or low-level readers.

With the announcement of the PLUS effort, new emphasis was directed toward the state's illiteracy problem. The South Carolina Education Television Network contributed to the support of the national PLUS campaign through the development of public service announcements, a documentary about adult illiteracy and undereducation in South Carolina, and programs that are providing solutions to the illiteracy problem.

Further reinforcement was given by the Governor's office, with the creation of a 15-member Committee on Literacy, whose objective was to prepare a strategic plan to address the state's illiteracy problem. In addition, the Program Assistance Hotline, run out of the Lieutenant Governor's office, was involved in the campaign to promote literacy programs throughout the state.

The literacy efforts initiated by the various State offices in South Carolina provided additional momentum for the activities undertaken by school districts and local literacy programs. These State efforts, in conjunction with the national PLUS campaign, enabled the local task forces to move forward in soliciting the assistance of business and community leaders in addressing the illiteracy problem.

Task Force Organization and Operation

Role of Convener and Members. As convener of the Beaufort County task force, the ABE director was responsible for guiding the overall direction of task force activities. In an effort to broaden his base of support for the task force, the ABE director formed a team with the Beaufort County Literacy Association's coordinator, and the two planned and arranged all task force events. They also worked together successfully in soliciting support from community members, local government, and business representatives in Beaufort and Jasper Counties.

At the beginning of the PLUS campaign, the ABE director looked to the Literacy Association's Board of Directors to constitute the task force's core membership. The Board members, representative of a variety of organizations and institutions, such as higher education, social services, the library, employment services, job training, and the ministry, had a long history of involvement in literacy activities and were logical choices for the task force. As task force members, the Board worked to enhance their organizations' participation in literacy efforts, and to expand the opportunities available for adults to receive reading instruction.

Task Force Meetings. The Beaufort County task force's bimonthly meetings were convened in conjunction with those of the Literacy Association's Board. These meetings, usually held at Beaufort's public television station, kept members apprised of statewide PLUS activities, and were a forum for planning local

efforts. During the first year of PLUS, task force members focused their activities on learner and volunteer recruitment, training, and service provision. PLUS teleconferences were the focus of a number of task force meetings, and members were receptive to the activities and ideas suggested in the teleconferences.

In order to decentralize some of the task force responsibilities, public relations and fundraising committees were formed. These committees met separately to plan activities, and were active throughout the year in working with the ETV station and community groups.

Awareness Raising

PBS Support. The Beaufort public television station, WJWJ, provided extensive local support for PLUS efforts. A number of activities were undertaken as part of the South Carolina Educational Television Network's extensive PLUS media campaign, while others were initiated at the Beaufort station.

In September 1986, South Carolina ETV produced a statewide telethon in conjunction with the national PBS documentary. The telethon, which was aired on all of the state's educational television stations, was intended to recruit volunteers and adult learners from across the state, and to make referrals to appropriate local programs. As part of the statewide telethon, WJWJ's station manager worked with task force members to produce a 30-minute local segment, which depicted volunteers tutoring in a variety of learning environments. The segment included interviews with both volunteers and adult learners from the Beaufort area, and helped to raise the interest of local community members about local literacy activities. In addition, PSAs were shown prior to the telethon and local segment.

In addition to producing the local segment for the telethon, WJWJ gave visibility to task force activities through its local programming. Task members, volunteers, and adult learners ap-

peared on the station's nightly news program, which draws a large viewership from Beaufort County. As well, announcements of literacy activities were included on WJWJ's daily calendar of events and on the public radio station.

As part of its general support for literacy, the PBS station provided the Literacy Association with office space for tutoring activities, clerical services, and use of office equipment. Although the relationship between the station and Literacy Association had been in existence for three years, PLUS activities heightened WJWJ's involvement in literacy-related efforts. Both on-air coverage of the illiteracy problem and local task force events, and the location of tutoring in the station's office building, broadened WJWJ's exposure to the community, including the demographic composition of its viewers.

ABC Involvement. The ABC network's national programming was the primary source of awareness for Beaufort County's task force. The ABC documentaries, daytime programming, and public service announcements strengthened the highlighted the illiteracy issue locally, and reinforced the activities undertaken by Beaufort's PBS station, even though the geographical location of Beaufort, between the two ABC affiliates in Charleston and Savannah, made it difficult for the task force to undertake any activities of significance.

General Awareness Activities. Task force members initiated a number of activities to complement the television media awareness efforts. These included outreach through the publication of newspaper articles and flyers, public speaking, and personal contact with community members.

At the onset of the PLUS campaign, task force members approached local newspapers regarding the publication of human interest stories about the successes of adult learners, as well as news reporting of task force events. Contacts were made with newspapers in Beaufort, on the local islands, and at the military bases. The newspapers printed articles about task force activ-

ities and later contacted the convener regularly for updates on task force events.

The task force formed a speakers' bureau for facilitating presentations to local organizations and businesses in an attempt to increase the community's awareness about illiteracy. Task force members spoke with human service and employment agencies, local government offices, and businesses in Beaufort and Jasper Counties. The information gathered through contacts with these groups was compiled into a directory, for use as a reference by task force members in public speaking engagements and community outreach activities.

Finally, the task force developed flyers and posters for recruitment of adult learners and volunteers. Literacy flyers were distributed through mailings to parents of students in Beaufort's public school system and to community organizations. As well, the local library disseminated literacy bookmarks in local bookstores and at the library. Overall, the PLUS campaign bolstered the public relations activities previously undertaken by the Literacy Association and ABE program, which were aimed at reaching adults in need of literacy services.

Community Participation

Task force outreach efforts were directed toward soliciting the involvement of business and industry, religious groups, and community organizations in literacy-related activities. Particular emphasis was placed on developing workplace literacy programs in conjunction with the local hotel industry. As well, task force members urged the participation of religious and community groups, which served segments of the two-county population traditionally characterized as being in need of literacy services.

Business and Industry. A key factor responsible for Beaufort County's economic growth has been the burgeoning tourist industry on the islands. As the industry has expanded, there has

continued to be a shortage of qualified workers to perform jobs in the hotels. In an attempt to deal with the labor-shortage problem, hotels recruited workers from neighboring communities, as well as initiated in-house programs to provide basic skills remediation and training for their employees.

During PLUS's first year, the task force convener and Literacy Association coordinator contacted a number of hotel managers and personnel staff, providing information about literacy and basic skills programs, and suggesting ways that cooperative education efforts could be established. One result of task force members' activities was the creation by the Mariner's Inn of an on-site education program for employees. After experiencing difficulties in retaining and promoting employees, the Inn's management decided to provide their staff with opportunities for skill advancement and training.

The Mariner's program, the Career Development Series, was established with the assistance of the Literacy Association coordinator and the ABE program director. They provided information about possible curriculum for the Series, which includes courses in grammar, punctuation, basic mathematics, voice, and diction, as well as staff to teach the courses. The Inn publicizes the program extensively, through memos to employees, weekly announcements in payroll checks, and presentations by the Literacy Association coordinator at Inn staff meetings. Staff managers and supervisors of departments, such as housekeeping and food service, encourage their employees' participation in the program through their own enrollment in courses. As a further incentive, employees are given release time for their classes, which are held at the Inn. Thus, the program has been structured to help assure employees's participation and success.

Other business support for literacy in Beaufort County has come from the Palmetto Electric Company's support group--Women Involved in Rural Electrification (WIRE). Task force members made a presentation to the company about the illiteracy problem

in the county, and the ways in which business can support ongoing efforts. As a result of the presentation, WIRE made several donations to the Literacy Association for the purchase of books and materials.

Involvement by Local Organizations. In an attempt to broaden community participation in literacy activities, especially from religious and governmental organizations, the task force convener and Literacy Association coordinator solicited support from a number of groups in the Beaufort area. These efforts included:

- The Ministerial Association placed literacy bookmarks in prayer books at local churches, and members went door-to-door caroling for literacy during the holiday season, in an effort to recruit volunteers;
- The First Presbyterian Church and the library on Hilton Head Island are providing space for tutoring;
- The mayor of Hilton Head Island read a proclamation at the town meeting in the Fall 1986, declaring adult education week, and pledging support for PLUS; and
- Task force members set up literacy information booths at key locations in Beaufort County, during events such as the Water Festival, and at all food distribution centers.

These activities were effective in increasing the visibility of literacy services in the county. They also facilitated the establishment of linkages between the Literacy Association and groups that have regular contact with adult learners, who are potential clients of literacy services.

Volunteer and Adult Learner Recruitment

Hotline Number. In an effort to organize a statewide recruitment effort, the South Carolina Department of Education has sponsored a state hotline 800 number, which was used on ABC affiliate and South Carolina ETV network programs and public service announcements. As well, the Beaufort County task force placed the telephone numbers of the Literacy Association and the ABE program, as well as the state hotline number, as the tag line on programs and PSAs produced by WJWJ, Beaufort's ETV station. The local numbers also were printed on posters and bookmarks distributed by the task force. Finally, the Beaufort service providers received a limited number of referrals from the national Contact hotline.

Community Recruitment Efforts. Task force members worked closely with local community organizations and agencies, as well as educational institutions, in recruiting volunteers and adult learners. While many of the organizations are not direct deliverers of education services, they serve clients who are potential volunteers and adult learners. For example, task force members worked with the County Employment Security Agency to identify clients who have literacy problems, and to create processes for referring these clients to the Literacy Association and ABE programs. Agency staff also were encouraged to volunteer their services as tutors.

In addition to collaborating with the Employment Security Agency, task force members worked with St. Mary's Human Development Center, an alternative school and child development center, in encouraging referrals to literacy services. Staff at Beaufort's library also were active participants in task force activities.

The community organizations were joined by the Beaufort Technical College in undertaking referral activities. Staff in the college's remediation program screen students regularly for reading deficiencies, and refer those with identified deficiencies to the Literacy Association for instruction.

Impact on Service Provision

Collaboration. The initiation of the PLUS campaign helped to solidify a firm, cooperative relationship between the ABE program director and the Literacy Association coordinator. While the two groups had always been involved in some joint activities, for example, the ABE director served as a Literacy Association Board member, the formation of a local PLUS task force provided a unique opportunity for the two to join forces in working as a team in literacy awareness and outreach activities. This coordination resulted in a stronger referral system between the two programs, such that Literacy Association participants are encouraged to enroll in ABE classes, and to work toward the attainment of a GED certificate. The cooperative work between the director and coordinator has portrayed an image to the community of vigor and enthusiasm in combating the illiteracy problem.

Program Growth. The PLUS task force's local efforts complemented those of the national campaign in increasing the numbers of adult learners in volunteers in Beaufort and Jasper Counties. The Literacy Association and ABE programs both have experienced dramatic growth. For example, during the first year of PLUS, the Literacy Association doubled the number of adults served by the program. As well, the numbers of volunteers and training workshops increased, and the Association opened an office on Hilton Head Island, to provide more convenient services for island employees and residents.

The Beaufort ABE program also has had expanded class enrollments. In some instances, learners both are attending ABE classes and are being tutored by an Association volunteer. The Association, which uses the Laubach method, has tried to facilitate the transfer from the tutorial setting to the ABE class, by encouraging tutors to accompany learners to ABE classes. This process provides continuity for the learner and increases the information about the learner that is available to ABE instructors.

In addition to program growth, the PLUS effort had an impact on the administration of the Literacy Association's services. Prior to PLUS, the Association had employed the coordinator in a part-time position. As the coordinator's workload expanded with PLUS awareness activities, additional funding was secured from the United Way to increase the position to full-time. This change enabled the Association to become involved fully in the PLUS campaign.

Summary

As a local task force, the Beaufort County PLUS effort provided the momentum for building a strong, community base for dealing with the illiteracy problem. Through the work of the ABE program director, as task force convener, and the Literacy Association coordinator, social service and governmental agencies, religious groups, community organizations, and businesses were encouraged to participate in the literacy campaign.

Strong State support bolstered Beaufort's PLUS activities through the leadership provided by the Education Department's Office of Adult Education in convening meetings, managing a statewide hotline, and providing information about national PLUS events. As well, the South Carolina Educational Television Network and the local Beaufort ETV station made strong contributions to the PLUS campaign, through the production of a documentary, local programs, and public service announcements.

The task force worked hard to build awareness among adults most in need of literacy services. Through personal contacts and participation in broadcast media events, the task force convener and Literacy Association coordinator attempted to reach residents of Beaufort and Jasper Counties who were not aware of the types and availability of literacy instruction. These efforts were complemented by the task force's work with the hotel industry and

other businesses on Hilton Head Island, in which employers were encouraged to develop workplace literacy programs and support ongoing literacy services.

Finally, the PLUS campaign resulted in a substantial increase in adult learners' participation in programs sponsored by the Literacy Association and Adult Basic Education. Community members increasingly offered their services as volunteers, and these volunteers were utilized both in literacy and ABE programs. Overall, PLUS efforts have facilitated the development of an improved system for encouraged adults to move forward in achieving their educational goals.

III. ST. LOUIS PLUS TASK FORCE

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Context

The St. Louis task force is one of eight local PLUS efforts that has been established in Missouri. At the State Director of Adult Education's request, ABE program directors from across the state brought together representatives from education, social services, labor, business and the media to form local task forces. These PLUS groups were organized to address the needs of approximately 1,200,000 adults statewide, who were identified as potential participants in literacy programs.

As a local task force, the St. Louis effort serves the metropolitan St. Louis area, a diverse urban center with approximately 160,000 adults in need of literacy services. As a result of the St. Louis PLUS media campaign, the requests to participate in literacy and ABE programs in the city exceeded the capacities of available services.

The St. Louis PLUS task force experience was one of bridge building among local service providers, and of coalescing support from new organizations not previously involved in combating illiteracy.

Task Force Development

The St. Louis PLUS task force, known as the PLUS Steering Committee, was formed in the summer of 1986 by the director of the Missouri Coalition for Adult Literacy (MCAL), a statewide literacy coalition that was established in July 1985. MCAL's director previously was the administrator of the English Language School, a non-profit literacy service provider in St. Louis that was the fiscal agent for MCAL. In initiating the PLUS effort, MCAL's director was joined by the St. Louis PBS station's special events manager, who worked with her in undertaking all task force activities.

The first task force meeting was held in June 1986. Over 60

people attended this meeting, representing education groups such as ABE centers, community college programs, voluntary literacy services, as well as job training programs. Also present were representatives from the media (the St. Louis ABC affiliate, KTVI, and PBS station, KETC), libraries, community organizations, local government agencies, and business.

Although the primary impetus for organizing the task force came from the state's ABE director, the local PBS station manager also supported the campaign by encouraging the special events department staff to become involved in task force activities. As well, the local ABC affiliate had received information about PLUS, and was urged to support the PLUS campaign. Thus, from the outset the St. Louis task force was organized to involve individuals from all sectors of the community, including both of the broadcasting systems that were co-sponsoring the media campaign.

As a local task force was being formed in St. Louis and in the ABE centers across the state, the State Director of Adult Education asked the St. Louis task force convener to organize a statewide PLUS task force. This group was intended to be a vehicle for information sharing among local PLUS conveners, the ABE directors. The task force met three times during PLUS's first year, in conjunction with other meetings scheduled by the State Department of Education.

Related Literacy Efforts

The PLUS campaign's development in Missouri was related closely to the activities of the Missouri Coalition for Adult Literacy, a statewide coalition for coordinating literacy services. In July 1985, the University City School District in St. Louis, the organizational home of the English Language School, received a Section 310 grant from the State Department of Education's Division of Basic Education to create MCAL. It was intended that MCAL would function as a mechanism for organizing public, private, and volunteer resources to support literacy.

During its first year, 1985 to 1986, MCAL concentrated on awareness and outreach activities. Coalitions were formed in 29 of the 42 ABE centers in the state, beginning with a model coalition in St. Louis. This coalition included the primary literary service providers in the area, as well as representatives from the Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) programs, the Department of Employment Security (DES), and local branches of government agencies, such as welfare and transportation.

During MCAL's second year, 1986 to 1987, which was PLUS's first year, MCAL undertook a number of activities in support of the PLUS campaign. Anticipating that PLUS would result in increased numbers of volunteers and adult learners participating in literacy services, MCAL concentrated its efforts on providing local ABE centers with additional resources and assistance. Part of this assistance was the creation of a statewide volunteer network. MCAL divided the state into five regions, which corresponded to the library regions, and hired a part-time area coordinator for each region. The coordinators reported to MCAL's director in St. Louis, and operated out of their homes. Their major responsibilities were to recruit, train, and organize volunteers to provide one-on-one tutoring, using the Laubach method. Although located in the ABE centers, the tutoring activities were conducted separately from ABE classes. The coordinator structure was used as a resource for ABE directors, to help them with the workload generated by the PLUS campaign.

In addition to the tutoring program, MCAL developed and maintained a statewide hotline to serve both MCAL's and PLUS's needs. Located in MCAL's office in St. Louis and operated by MCAL staff, the hotline served as the primary vehicle for referral of prospective volunteers and adult learners to adult basic education programs.

As MCAL's second year came to close in the summer of 1987, its emphasis and activities shifted. The area coordinators' structure changed, so that each coordinator was placed in a local

ABE center, and reported to that center's director, rather than to MCAL's office. In addition, the state hotline was moved to an ABE center in Jefferson City, the state capital. In making these changes, the State Director of Adult Education wanted to expand the local coalition model, to involve individuals from a variety of service provider agencies and other community organizations. The original MCAL staff in St. Louis was asked to work toward building a foundation, which could support a variety of literacy-related activities from a central location, as well as the work being undertaken by local coalitions across the state.

Task Force Organization and Operation

Role of Convener and Members. As convener of the St. Louis PLUS task force, MCAL's director organized task force meetings, guided the overall direction of task force activities, and convened the statewide PLUS task force.

In undertaking these responsibilities, the St. Louis convener balanced the design of the statewide MCAL with the creation of a local task force that worked to expand the literacy services available in the metropolitan area. The task force attempted to bring together literacy service providers from a variety of systems, including ABE, community college, vocational education, and voluntary organizations to work toward a joint cause.

In addition to the convener's efforts in developing the task force, the St. Louis PBS station's special events manager assisted in the design and coordination of task force activities. She conducted mailings for the task force, and hosted task force events at the station. The station's involvement in PLUS reflected its experiences three years ago, when the station's special events department organized a community task force for the "Chemical People" campaign.

Task Force Meetings. The St. Louis task force initially convened monthly meetings, usually held at the PBS station, and eventually shifted to a bi-monthly meeting schedule. After an

early enthusiastic response to the task force, as evidenced by the attendance of 60 individuals at the first meeting, members' participation stabilized by the spring of 1987 to a core of about ten active members.

The initial task force meetings focused on identifying the illiteracy problem in the St. Louis area, and on determining the role that the task force could take in addressing the illiteracy problem. A working committee structure--i.e., Volunteers, Resource Compilation, Business and Industry, Needs and Resources, Media, and Program Research and Development--was formed to undertake specific activities. While a task force agenda was prepared during the initial meetings, task force members had some difficulties organizing their working committee activities. The difficulties were due, in part, to differences in task force members' perceptions about the amount of directive leadership needed to manage the task force. Some members were unclear about the relationship of local task force activities to the overall PLUS effort, and wanted specific instructions about how to proceed. Other members felt more comfortable about the task force's developmental process, and were willing to move ahead one activity at a time. As well, many of the task force members, especially literacy service providers, had never worked together before, and were trying to establish working relationships with each other.

Given these factors and the time required to carry out her responsibilities with MCAL, the task force convener chose a minimally-directive style in guiding task force activities. Her objective was to encourage members to assume responsibility for organizing task force activities and for moving the PLUS effort forward. As the year progressed, a core of task force members remained involved in the task force, building upon the suggestions given by PLUS through the teleconferences and materials. One activity that helped to coalesce the task force was the Urban Literacy Fund competition, in which a small group of members

worked together to prepare a winning proposal. Through the proposal design and preparation process, task force members had an opportunity to establish a common goal and specify activities that could be undertaken to accomplish the goal. The receipt of the Urban Literacy Fund grant also provided an incentive for task force members to refocus the task force's structure and direction.

In an effort to revitalize the task force, a self-appointed subcommittee of the task force met in June 1987. Those attending the meeting were the convener and MCAL staff, the PBS representative, and core members of the existing task force committees. The major objective of the meeting was to create a new committee that could take over the leadership of the task force, and relieve the present convener of her responsibilities for managing the task force's overall operation.

A major impetus for the task force revitalization was the receipt of the Urban Literacy grant, which provided the task force with funds for continuing and expanding the activities begun during PLUS's first year. Thus, in the June meeting, the subcommittee adopted three goals: 1) to hire a resource person whose responsibilities would include fund raising and coordinating task force activities; 2) to develop a process for guiding and supervising the resource person; and 3) to strengthen the task force by recruiting new members from the community who could support task force activities.

In order to address the leadership issue, the subcommittee appointed a representative from a local civic group, a non-service provider, as the temporary chairperson of a new executive committee. The intent was to establish a committee, whose chairperson would work to move the task force ahead in pursuing new activities during PLUS's second year.

Awareness Raising

Prior to PLUS, the St. Louis media had focused attention on illiteracy through the broadcast of local programs. For example, an anchorwoman from the NBC affiliate had produced a five-part series on the illiteracy problem, and had developed a reading program for adults with literacy problems. The CBS affiliate had produced a PSA that featured Curtis Greer, a local professional athlete. The advent of PLUS also heightened the awareness of St. Louis's independent television stations, which had shown literacy PSAs since the beginning of the campaign. One independent station, which broadcasts old movies, was successful in recruiting adult learners.

PBS Support. The PBS station's support of PLUS and local task force activities was consistent and solid since the beginning of the campaign. In preparation for the PBS documentary in September 1986, the PBS task force representative coordinated a task force effort, in which 2,000 letters were mailed to all local school superintendents, boards of education, church groups, and community organizations. The letter signed by the PBS representative, the ABC affiliate's task force representative, and the task force convener, explained the documentary and asked for support for PLUS. These organizations were offered the opportunity to preview the documentary and, as a result of the mailing, ten previews were scheduled. The PBS representative also made the documentary available on videotape.

Following the national broadcast of the documentary, the St. Louis PBS station produced a call-in program, in which a panel of local literacy experts including task force members answered questions about the local illiteracy problem. MCAL's state literacy hotline number, as well as the state hotline number for neighboring Illinois, were on the tagline during the program. To supplement the number of telephone lines available to handle hotline calls in Missouri, the state's four PBS stations used part of their MacArthur Foundation grant monies to install extra

lines for September 1986. Thus, in St. Louis, the MCAL state hotline at the English Language School served as the primary funnel for PLUS calls during September.

As part of an ongoing effort to reach different segments of the community, the PBS station hosted a meeting in November 1986 of members of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, in order to raise members' awareness about the effects of illiteracy on their advertising efforts. A panel of eight television and newspaper representatives discussed the illiteracy problem and its impact upon advertising. One result of the meeting was the publication of an article in the NATAS newsletter about the information discussed by the panel. NATAS also sponsored a full-page ad in the PBS station's program guide to broaden awareness about illiteracy.

In addition to the sponsorship of special events, the PBS station broadcast the GED series during October 1986. All of these activities enhanced the task force's efforts, and encouraged the involvement of individuals from a variety of organizations in St. Louis.

ABC Involvement. The St. Louis ABC affiliate supported the PLUS effort through a number of broadcast and promotional activities. During September 1986, the affiliate devoted five minutes to illiteracy on two nights of its evening newsprogram. The ABC documentary was broadcast twice on the ABC station, and the station produced its own 30 minute documentary, which was aimed at recruiting students. Over the course of PLUS's first year, the nationally-produced PSAs were shown regularly in St. Louis.

In addition to these broadcast activities, the ABC affiliate's task force representative participated in PLUS activities, and hosted a task force meeting at the station, in addition to an affiliate-sponsored promotion in which the state's literacy hotline number was printed on balloons that were released at a local parade.

General Awareness Efforts. The PBS and ABC television activities in St. Louis were enhanced by other media awareness efforts. All of the local radio stations have broadcast PSAs, which encouraged adult learners and volunteers to contact local literacy service providers. In addition to broadcast activities, radio station KMOX teamed with St. Louis Magazine and sponsored a "Rap for Reading" contest at Union Station.

The print media in St. Louis published articles about the illiteracy problem, and featured the success stories of adult learners. Representatives from the St. Louis Post Dispatch were particularly supportive of PLUS, through their participation in task force meetings and special events.

Community Participation

The St. Louis task force attempted to generate support from various sectors of the community, particularly organizations and agencies that serve adults potentially in need of literacy services. During PLUS's first year, task force members worked to heighten these groups' awareness about illiteracy, and promote collaboration between them and local literacy service providers.

Governmental Agencies. PLUS activities provided opportunities for representatives from local governmental agencies, such as state probation and social service offices, to learn about the availability of local literacy services. One agency that undertook literacy-related activities as a result of PLUS was the State Probation and Parole Office in St. Louis, which serves the eastern section of Missouri. The task force representative from this office, the Coordinator of Literacy, Education, and Training, was an active participant in task force meetings since the beginning of PLUS. Through her contact with task force members, the coordinator was able to expand the role of the Employment Liaisons in her office to include literacy. The Literacy/Employment Liaisons review their caseloads to identify clients who might be in need of literacy instruction, and refer

them to local ABE programs.

In addition to increasing the opportunities for clients to receive literacy services, PLUS also prompted the coordinator to encourage Probation and Parole Office staff to volunteer their services as literacy tutors. Finally, the task force meetings provided the coordinator with the opportunity to establish linkages with education and social service agencies. Probation and Parole clients were encouraged to enroll in General Educational revelopment (GED) classes, and have been referred to programs such as Displaced Homemakers.

Business/Industry. Members of the task force's Business and Industry working committee attempted to solicit support from local businesses, by encouraging their participation in task force activities and by broadening their awareness about the impact of illiteracy on the functioning of businesses. The Monsanto Corporation supported the literacy cause in St. Louis, by contributing both financial and human resources. For example, the corporation gave a small grant to MCAL to help with the organization of the volunteer network. In addition, representatives from the corporation attended task force meetings, and were instrumental in helping to refocus the task force for PLUS's second year.

Education Agencies. The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges teleconference broadcast on June 24, 1987 provided an opportunity for task force members to work with St. Louis Community College in organizing a special event. The teleconference, which was shown at one of the community college campuses, was preceded by a buffet reception for about 250 invited guests. In organizing the event, the community college staff used both the PLUS task force and community college mailing lists to create the teleconference invitation list. A panel discussion, featuring task force representatives, a legislator, a union representative, and an economic council member, followed the broadcast.

Volunteer and Adult Learner Recruitment

Hotline Number. The primary recruitment method used to generate adult learners and volunteers was the placement of the statewide literacy hotline number on television and radio PSAs and special programs. Developed by MCAL during August 1986, the hotline answering and referral system was maintained during the campaign's first year. MCAL's staff were responsible for answering the hotline and referring prospective volunteers and adult learners to adult basic education programs. Each hotline call was recorded in triplicate. One copy was forwarded to the ABE program closest to the caller; one was sent to the appropriate area coordinator; and one copy was kept at MCAL's offices. The MCAL staff developed a computerized database for maintaining a running tally of volunteers and adult learners, who were referred to ABE programs across the state. The database was designed to provide information about the provision of literacy services, including the names of current adult learners and volunteers, the number of contact hours between tutors and adult learners, and the materials used by tutors.

Community Recruitment Efforts. In addition to the broadcast media recruitment efforts, other techniques were used to reach potential volunteers and adult learners. For example, the literacy hotline number was included on welfare and unemployment checks, as well as on all state payroll checks. In a combined recruitment and fundraising effort, balloons with the hotline were distributed in exchange for donations at a local parade. Both strategies were effective in generating hotline calls.

Impact on Service Provision

Collaboration. The PLUS campaign in St. Louis helped both to solidify existing relationships among service providers, and to encourage the formation of new linkages. Traditionally, service providers in the metropolitan area had not worked together in delivering literacy services. However, the over-

whelming response of adult learners to PLUS recruitment efforts, as well as the attempts made by the task force to foster cooperation, resulted in increased communication among literacy service providers, and in some service coordination. For example, MCAL's attempt to organize a statewide volunteer network helped to integrate volunteers into ABE centers. The task force meetings brought together representatives from community colleges, the Literacy Council of St. Louis, ABE programs, and libraries, in an effort to encourage information sharing and cross referral of learners.

Service Provider Growth. All of the literacy services in St. Louis felt the impact of PLUS. In spite of the planning and preparation that was undertaken for the media campaign, service providers were not prepared for the response, particularly by adult learners. As was the experience of literacy services in other urban areas, the St. Louis providers had to deal with mismatch problems in placing adult learners with volunteers. In addition, the presence of new learners in the ABE, community college, and volunteer literacy programs, strained the existing resource base. However, the overall effect of PLUS was to reach adults in St. Louis who previously were not aware of the available literacy services, and to stimulate their participation in these programs.

Summary

The PLUS task force in St. Louis was able to build upon the state's literacy initiative in organizing a successful recruitment effort for new adult learners and volunteers. The awareness and outreach activities undertaken by the Missouri Coalition for Literacy during the year prior to PLUS served as a foundation for the task force's work when PLUS began. PLUS, however, added a key element to the recruitment strategy--the support of PBS and ABC.

Through task force meetings and activities, collaborative

relationships among literacy service providers were created and enhanced. Unlike other previous attempts to foster cooperation, the PLUS effort provided at least one common goal for providers to work toward. The positive response to the media campaign reinforced the need among service providers to ensure that the new adult learners can be served adequately.

Finally, task force members were able to assess their progress and problems, and to move ahead in restructuring the task force. With the funds provided by an Urban Literacy Fund grant, the task force will be able to pursue new activities during PLUS's continuation.

IV. LOS ANGELES AREA PLUS TASK FORCE

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Context

The Los Angeles Area task force is one of 15 PLUS efforts that was organized in California during the PLUS campaign's first year. Initial support for PLUS in California came from the State Library's Literacy Campaign, which urged its grantees, library literacy programs, to join with ABC affiliates, PBS stations, and other organizations in forming local task forces. The result was a comprehensive PLUS effort in California, which both built upon the strengths of the state's adult basic education system, and broadened the base of service providers that can meet the diverse literacy needs of adults in the state.

As a regional task force, the Los Angeles Area PLUS effort serves primarily Los Angeles County, as well as surrounding Orange, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Kern, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. This geographical area, a rich mix of cultural groups, including Hispanics, Asians, blacks, and whites, and is the home of a number of literacy service providers, as well as the state's largest adult basic education program.

The Los Angeles Area PLUS experience was one of expansion of existing literacy efforts, bridge-building among service providers, and development of new strategies for reaching adults most in need of literacy instruction.

Task Force Development

The Los Angeles Area PLUS task force was formed in early 1986 from an existing group, the KCET AMERICAN TICKET Literacy Outreach Committee. The KCET AMERICAN TICKET Project, a national television series consisting of 26 half-hour programs designed to motivate adults as well as teach basic skills and English as a second language, was initiated in 1985 by KCET, the Southern and Central California PBS television station. In the beginning months of the AMERICAN TICKET Project, a Literacy Outreach

Committee was created to develop a plan for encouraging public understanding of the magnitude of the illiteracy problem. This Committee was comprised of representatives from 38 different literacy service providers in the Los Angeles area, ABE programs, library literacy programs, volunteer groups, Laubach and Literacy Volunteers of America, prison education programs, and community-based literacy programs.

In June 1985, representatives of the AMERICAN TICKET Outreach Committee attended a Project PLUS planning meeting at WQED in Pittsburgh. Subsequently, WQED invited KCET to organize a PLUS task force in Los Angeles, with the AMERICAN TICKET project director serving as primary convener. At about the same time, the Public Television Outreach Alliance's regional coordinator in Seattle contacted the director of the Adult Reading Project at the Los Angeles Public Library, to explore her interest in the PLUS effort.

As a result of these initial discussions, the directors of the literacy programs at the Los Angeles City and County libraries were designated as task force co-conveners, while the AMERICAN TICKET project director was designated to serve as the director of the PLUS effort. It also was determined that the membership for the PLUS task force would be drawn from TICKET's Outreach Committee, since the Committee was focused on building public awareness about illiteracy, and the existing Committee members represented the major adult basic education and literacy service providers in the Los Angeles area.

Thus, the advent of PLUS provided a new emphasis for the Outreach Committee, as the AMERICAN TICKET Project moved ahead with the development of the pilot television series and with fundraising. With the Outreach Committee members as its core, the PLUS task force was organized and its membership expanded to include representatives from a variety of organizations in the Los Angeles area.

Related Literacy Efforts

The PLUS effort in the Los Angeles area complemented a number of related literacy endeavors, which either preceded PLUS or were undertaken at the same time as PLUS was being organized. The membership of the Los Angeles Area PLUS task force overlapped with these groups, and several task force activities were initiated in partnership with them. These groups are:

- Southern California Coalition for Literacy (SCCL). The Coalition was organized to provide a forum for literacy service providers to exchange ideas and information. The Coalition's members are literacy service providers and supporters from the Los Angeles area, many of whom belong to the PLUS task force. During the first year of PLUS, the Coalition members supported the efforts of the PLUS task force.

- California Literacy Campaign. The Campaign consists of the libraries that are funded by the California State Library System to provide library-based literacy services. As of July 1987, 63 libraries were members of the Campaign;

- Southern California Library Literacy Network. The Network is comprised of the grantees of the California Literacy Campaign who are located in Southern California, including the Los Angeles Public Library, the organizational base of the task force's co-convener. The group meets bimonthly, and its activities have included tutor training, discussions about tutoring techniques, and scheduling and information exchange. PLUS activities were on the Network's agenda regularly during PLUS's first year; and

- California Alliance for Literacy. The Alliance was organized by the California State Department of Education's Adult,

> Alternative, and Continuation Education Division and the California State Library. Its purpose is to promote coordinated action and cooperative ventures among adult literacy services in the state. The Alliance's membership is comprised of a number of organizations that also are represented on the Los Angeles Area PLUS task force.

Task Force Organization and Operation

Roles of Co-Conveners. The task force's leadership provided guidance to the task force through planning meetings and events, and by coordinating activities with the related literacy efforts in the Los Angeles area. They worked assiduously to build networks, broadening the task force's original membership of literacy service providers to include representatives from higher education institutions, business and industry, religious organizations, education, government, community agencies, and additional media groups. As well, the leadership helped to connect businesses with literacy service providers, and assisted the media in identifying volunteers and adult learners for feature stories and special reports.

The KCET director had primary responsibility for organizing the monthly task force meetings, which were held at the KCET station. She located speakers for the meetings, and arranged for the broadcast of the PLUS teleconferences at the station. In addition, task force materials and correspondence were produced at KCET. The library co-conveners served as co-chairs of the task force subcommittees, and were instrumental in developing projects and presentations on PLUS.

Task Force Meetings. Task force meetings provided a forum for representatives from a variety of organizations in the Los Angeles area to learn about available literacy services, and to plan activities in support of the PLUS media campaign. More importantly, these meetings were new opportunities for service providers to exchange information about their programs, and begin

developing cooperative working relationships.

During the initial task force gatherings, members discussed possible task force goals and decided to concentrate their activities on building awareness about available literacy services, and expanding the membership of the task force beyond that of service providers. Rather than forming structured committees, a process undertaken by some PLUS task forces, the Los Angeles group organized ad hoc committees to work on specific activities. In keeping with the task force's goals, members focused their efforts on the development of a directory of literacy service providers, and a brochure. They also initiated contacts with the business community and higher education institutions, to orient new audiences to the literacy issue. While fundraising was not a major activity undertaken by the task force as a whole, some financial resources and in-kind donations were solicited to support special task force events.

Although much of the discussion at the task force meetings focused on service provision issues, task force members representing other organizations, including businesses, community agencies, religious groups, and the media, were able to obtain a sense of the scope and dimensions of the illiteracy problem in the Los Angeles area. Through interactions with service providers, task force members also had opportunities to establish linkages with providers for potential literacy program development within their organizations.

Overall, task force members maintained their interest in the task force's initiatives, and the group sustained its momentum during the first year of the PLUS campaign. The meetings served as an effective mechanism for disseminating information, both about specific task force events and those planned by the other literacy organizations and networks in the Los Angeles area.

Finally, the assistance provided through the national PLUS campaign, including materials sent by the Outreach Alliance's regional coordinator and the PLUS teleconferences, supported the

task force's activities, and provided reinforcement for the direction of the task force efforts.

Awareness Raising

PBS Support. A combination of ongoing and new local media efforts were the key elements in the literacy awareness campaign in the Los Angeles area. KCET's involvement in literacy began with the AMERICAN TICKET Project, as was described previously. As part of the project, the Outreach Committee designed a model outreach plan for communities to address their illiteracy problems. The plan suggested activities that could be undertaken to assess community resources, coalesce community support, and encourage media participation. In many ways, this plan provided a blueprint for the development of a PLUS task force and was used by the Los Angeles Area PLUS group in its initial planning.

In addition to the AMERICAN TICKET Project's director, who served as the task force's director, KCET's manager of community outreach participated as a task force member. Since the station a policy, similar to that of many other PBS stations, of not airing PSAs unless they are related directly to programming, few of the PBS/PLUS PSAs were shown on KCET during the first year of PLUS. However, the station produced a special segment on literacy in June 1987 as part of its regular program, "California Stories." This segment portrayed the varieties of adults in Southern California who have illiteracy problems, and described the services that are available to meet their needs. Special PSAs were created by the station to promote interest in the special segment.

ABC Involvement. The ABC affiliate's (KABC) participation in literacy predated the beginning of PLUS. At about the time that PLUS was beginning, KABC assisted S&W Foods with a fund-raising event for the Los Angeles Library Adult Reading Project. A box luncheon promotion was held at the Century City Shopping Plaza. The theme of the box luncheon and PSAs that preceded the

event was, "Take a Chomp Out of Literacy." A local television celebrity, the KABC weatherman, was featured in the PSAs and at the box luncheon, where lunches were sold to the public and funds were raised through a product promotion. This event gave visibility to the library literacy program and to the overall literacy effort.

As the PLUS task force got underway in the Los Angeles area, the ABC affiliate's director of community affairs became the PLUS representative. After a short period, a change in personnel resulted in his being replaced by the public affairs director, who attended many of the task force meetings. Although KABC is supportive of the PLUS campaign, a shortage of staff and high volume of work in the public affairs office restricted the amount of the station's involvement in PLUS. One PSA, which depicts an older adult trying to read to a younger child, was shown regularly on KABC. Though the PSA a literacy theme, it was not created specifically for PLUS, but as part of the ongoing literacy effort in Los Angeles. The PSA does carry the local hotline number as the tag line, and generated in generating a number of calls from volunteers. The national PLUS PSAs were shown infrequently by the affiliate, due to other priorities in local programming.

General Awareness Efforts. The Los Angeles area newspapers have supported the task force's efforts through coverage of special events, and publication of feature articles. Representatives from two major local newspapers, the Los Angeles Times and the Los Angeles Herald Examiner, were active participants in task force meetings.

In addition to the attention given to task force activities by the print media, other techniques were used by task force members to draw attention to their activities. A number of task force members made presentations before community groups and businesses, described the illiteracy problems in the Los Angeles area, and urged participation in literacy-related activities.

The task force's co-conveners included information about the PLUS effort while making presentations about their respective projects. The KABC representative spoke before the Black Employees Association at the station and, as a result, the Association decided to open its own tutoring center. The awareness efforts undertaken by task force members helped to enhance the visibility of the PLUS campaign and the individual efforts of literacy service providers.

Community Participation

During the first year of PLUS, a number of special events were organized in Los Angeles to highlight the illiteracy problem and the efforts undertaken to combat it. While not all of the activities were sponsored directly by the PLUS task force, its members participated in the events, and the results were beneficial to the task force's ongoing work. These events, aimed at three different sectors of the community, are described below.

Business and Industry. In October 1986, a literacy seminar was held at the Chamber of Commerce in Los Angeles to: 1) provide awareness about adult illiteracy, 2) encourage active involvement and support of the business community in dealing with their problem, and 3) provide models that show how business can promote adult literacy. Sponsored by the Times-Mirror Company, and organized by SCCL, a consortium of 65 persons involved with literacy in the Los Angeles area, the seminar drew an audience of more than 200 business and community representatives. Literacy service providers, who represented their own organizations as well as the PLUS task force, planned the seminar. In addition to the sponsorship provided by the Times-Mirror Company, other groups contributed financial and in-kind services, including KCET-TV, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, California Literacy, Inc., the California State University, the Los Angeles Herald Examiner, and the Placentia Library District.

As a result of the seminar, local businesses contacted ser-

vice providers to explore the development of off- and on-site workplace literacy programs. For example, one corporation identified 250 of its employees who were in need of literacy or ESL instruction, and asked the Los Angeles Public Library to help them organize a process for referring these employees to programs in their communities. As a follow-up to the seminar, the planning committee published the proceedings from the event, and distributed the document to those who attended and other interested individuals.

Higher Education. In an effort to promote student service in literacy in institutions of higher education, the PLUS task force organized a campus literacy program. Support for this effort was given by the California State University's Office of Special Programs, whose director served as chair of the task force's subcommittee. A one-day workshop was created by task force subcommittees and university and college representatives. The workshop's purpose is to explore the design and implementation of community service literacy projects on college and university campuses, especially strategies for enlisting students as volunteer tutors. Two workshops were held during Spring 1987, and two during Fall 1987. Workshop speakers included representatives from literacy programs, academicians, and politicians.

The campus literacy program provided administrators, faculty, and students with an opportunity to learn about the illiteracy problem and possible methods of combating it. A number of literacy-related activities were suggested, such as including illiteracy in social science coursework; establishing campus-based tutoring programs; and developing community-based internships for students.

Religious Organizations. PLUS task force efforts also extended to various religious denominations in the Los Angeles area. For example, the KCET director met with representatives from the Catholic Archdiocese to discuss the PLUS campaign and seek support. Subsequently, the Archdiocese appointed a repre-

sentative to the task force and published articles about local literacy activities, which were placed in the Archdiocese's newspaper, The Tidings.

Volunteer and Adult Learner Recruitment

The PLUS task force used two main techniques for recruiting volunteers and adult learners: 1) referrals to a local hotline (800) number, and 2) publication and distribution of a flyer that lists literacy service providers, their individual telephone numbers, and the hotline number. Each is described below.

Hotline Number. During the early months of the PLUS campaign, task force members discussed the need for a hotline number for the Los Angeles area. The need for a hotline initially was identified by the Southern California Library Literacy Network. An existing hotline number at the Los Angeles County Library was considered for this purpose. The county library's number, an information-referral line for human services, was operating successfully at the library for a number of years. Funding was needed to expand the hotline to include literacy, so the Los Angeles County Library Literacy director and co-convener of the task force wrote a proposal for a grant from the State Library to implement the expansion. However, it took a couple of months before the hotline became operational, because of the timing of the funding cycle.

Task force members assisted with the development of a directory for use with the hotline, which contains approximately 350 public or non-profit agencies in the Los Angeles area. A librarian and data entry clerk were hired, under a state grant, to manage the hotline calls. They asked callers about their purpose for calling, their location, and brief background information. The hotline staff then used a computerized directory to refer the caller to one or more service providers, and told the caller that the information was being forwarded to these providers. Each call was entered into a computer and, at the end of each month,

computerized print-outs of calls were mailed to the service providers to whom calls were referred.

Since a local hotline did not exist during the initial months of the PLUS campaign, other telephone numbers were used in PSAs and media awareness efforts. For example, the Los Angeles ABC affiliate listed the national Contact hotline number on the literacy PSAs that were shown during the campaign's early months. However, after a short period, local literacy service providers requested that the national hotline number be removed, because the calls were not being referred to them in a timely manner.

Assistance was given to the task force by the Los Angeles Herald Examiner during the national broadcast of the PBS documentary in September 1986, when the newspaper made their customer service number available for PLUS calls. The newspaper's customer service representatives and task force volunteers were trained to answer the PLUS calls and forward them to appropriate service providers. During the time period of the PBS documentary, approximately 900 calls were received by the newspaper.

Service Provider Flyer. Another recruitment strategy used by the task force was the development of a flyer that lists literacy service providers in the Los Angeles area. A task force subcommittee identified criteria for listing service providers on the flyer, which stated that they had to be: 1) located within the four Los Angeles telephone area code regions, 2) an educational agency, library, volunteer group, or private sector organization that normally provides literacy services, and 3) large enough to process referrals and agree to refer adult learners to other service providers. Given the large numbers of service providers in the Los Angeles area, task force members thought that it was important to set criteria and list on the flyer only the literacy providers that met the criteria.

The flyer, which contains the local hotline number and the service providers' names and phone numbers, was distributed by task force members at presentations and task force events.

Impact on Service Provision

The national PLUS campaign and local task force activities had a positive impact on literacy service providers in the Los Angeles area. This impact was evident in the increased information sharing and collaboration that taken place among service providers, and in the growth that was realized by literacy programs.

Information Sharing. As the numbers of literacy and basic skills programs increased in the Los Angeles area, so has the need for communication among those providing services. The creation of the Southern California Coalition for Literacy was an early response to this communication issue. Later, the PLUS task force provided service deliverers with a forum for sharing information, and for forming working relationships with each other.

Through their participation in task force meetings, service providers learned about the types of services offered by each program, and explored ways in which they could work together cooperatively. A step toward this cooperation was the realization among service providers that they were not duplicating each others' efforts, and that there was a need for literacy services that offer group instruction, as well as one-on-one tutoring. Thus, the task force provided an impetus for service providers to exchange information about their respective services, and identify opportunities for working together.

Collaboration. In addition to broadening the knowledge that service providers have about each other, PLUS task force activities also motivated providers to collaborate, from service providers participating together in presentations and training sessions about literacy services, to the initiation of cross-referral systems in service provision.

Through the task force's awareness activities, service providers had opportunities to present information about their

programs at events sponsored by other service providers. For example, the California Literacy Council in Whittier invited an ABE program director to be the keynote speaker at its Spring breakfast. Representatives from ABE programs spoke at volunteer training meetings conducted by the library literacy programs. These occasions bridged the information gap among literacy providers, and encouraged cooperation.

A critical form of collaboration that developed among service providers is cross-referral of learners and volunteers. At one task force meeting, two service providers located within a three-block area discovered that one had a shortage of volunteers and an excess of learners, while the other had the reverse need. They determined that both services could benefit from the development of a cross-referral system, and established a mechanism for transferring information about volunteers and learners.

Service providers also began to strengthen or create processes for facilitating the movement of learners between services. For example, the Alhambra Adult School and the California Literacy program in San Gabriel had worked together for a number of years, and PLUS task force activities helped to solidify this relationship. The cooperative work between the library and ABE programs, whereby library providers and ABE directors exchange information about services and classes, also was encouraged by the PLUS effort.

Service Provider Growth. Perhaps the most significant impact of the PLUS campaign in the Los Angeles area was the increase in adult learners and volunteers. While the numbers of learners in Los Angeles requesting instruction in English as a second language traditionally have been high, (ABE programs have had waiting lists for a number of years) PLUS awareness efforts also prompted native-born learners to seek services. For example, the Los Angeles Public Library program witnessed a substantial increase in literacy learners requesting instruction, as have other programs.

Volunteers responded wholeheartedly to the PLUS call by contacting both ABE and literacy programs to offer their services. For example, a new program is being developed by the Los Angeles Unified School District ABE program to train volunteers. The Literacy Council in Whittier more than doubled their classes for training volunteers, and instituted a program to train foster grandparents to tutor. For the Glendale Literacy program, PLUS awareness activities, particularly the hotline, caused this program to double its number of volunteers.

Overall, service providers in the Los Angeles area responded to the effects of the PLUS campaign by expanding the availability of services, and by investigating new additional sources of funding through contacts with community and business members. As the requests for literacy services continued to increase, so has the need for new and expanded resources for service provision in the Los Angeles area.

Summary

The Los Angeles Area task force developed in an environment with an established history of involvement in the illiteracy problem. Building upon the efforts of existing groups such as the KCET AMERICAN TICKET Literacy Outreach Committee, the task force a firm base of support for the PLUS campaign. Task force members sought the participation of representatives from a wide variety of literacy services in the region, and solicited assistance from community groups and businesses.

Under the leadership of a task force director and co-conveners representing the media and literacy service providers, the task force set goals and created ad hoc committees to manage activities related to accomplishing these goals. Regular task force meetings served as a forum for service providers to exchange information about their programs, and for orienting new members to the issues involved in combating illiteracy. As well, these meetings were a vehicle for planning activities and for

sharing information about national PLUS events, particularly through the broadcast of the PLUS teleconferences.

A key strategy of the task force was to draw from the strength of its membership in raising awareness about illiteracy, and in coalescing community support for the issue. Media activities and community awareness events, such as the business and industry seminar and campus literacy program, were held in conjunction with other literacy groups in the Los Angeles area. These events gave visibility to the illiteracy problem, the PLUS campaign, and the efforts of other literacy groups. Through task force activities, literacy service providers increased their access to the media, and had opportunities to establish relationships with new funding sources and support organizations.

Finally, the local task force and national PLUS efforts resulted in the growth of the numbers of native and non-native born adult learners desiring instruction, and of volunteers offering their services as tutors. As envisaged by the designers of PLUS, the Los Angeles Area task force was a useful vehicle for coordinating a local outreach effort, and for organizing service providers' response to the media campaign.

V. MAINE PLUS TASK FORCE

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Context

The Maine PLUS effort developed as a statewide media campaign, under the coordination of the State Department of Educational and Cultural Service's Division of Adult and Community Education. Fully supportive of this effort were the ABC affiliates and PBS stations in the state.

PLUS activities were organized by two regional task forces, which encouraged the formation of 19 local task forces across the state. The boundaries of the two regional task forces follow the population settlement patterns in the state, north and south. The Northern Maine task force was centered in Bangor, and serves the surrounding rural counties. The Central-Southern Maine task force has two focal points, Lewiston and Portland, and includes the area south to the state's border and north to Augusta.

The regional and local task forces worked to reach the approximately 110,000 functionally illiterate adults, over the age of 25, who reside in Maine. Through an extensive media campaign, adults from the urban centers, as well as from more sparsely-populated areas, were made aware of the state's illiteracy problem and the services that are available to combat it.

This case study focuses on the activities that were undertaken by the Central-Southern Maine task force, with some attention to the PLUS efforts of local communities in the Northern Maine task force area. Both regional task forces were successful in mounting a statewide media campaign, which complemented the activities of the two national broadcasting systems.

Task Force Development

Information about the PLUS campaign initially arrived at the state's Division of Adult and Continuing Education in December 1985, when the Coordinator of Adult Basic Education received a PLUS packet from WQED in Pittsburgh. A representative from WQED

in Pittsburgh subsequently called the coordinator and asked him to suggest individuals who could serve as task force conveners. The coordinator, who recommended 12 ABE directors representing a diversity of programs, also distributed the packets to all of the ABE directors, so they would be aware of the upcoming media campaign.

As the Department of Educational and Cultural Services became aware of the PLUS effort, the ABC affiliate in Auburn, WMTW-TV, already had learned about the campaign. The station's general manager, concerned about the state's need to retrain its workforce, thought that a literacy campaign would be received well in Maine. At about the same time, the PBS station in Lewiston, WCBB, was apprised of the upcoming PLUS campaign, and was assessing its possible involvement.

The Maine Public Broadcasting System convened the first Maine PLUS meeting in Orono on April 9, 1986. This meeting, which was the beginning of the PLUS Northern Maine task force, included media representatives from the central-southern region of the state, the ABC affiliate in Auburn, and the PBS station in Lewiston. During May, these representatives participated in a Literacy Tea sponsored by the Bureau of Adult and Continuing Education. Held at the Governor's Mansion in the state capital, this event brought together representatives from ABE programs and voluntary literacy services, Department of Educational and Cultural Services staff, as well as others interested in supporting literacy.

As a result of these activities, the ABC affiliate in Auburn organized the first planning meeting for the Central-Southern Maine task force in May 1987. Participants included representatives from the PBS station in Lewiston, State Department of Educational and Cultural Services, local ABE programs, and adult education (AE), Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA)/Maine, and the University of Maine representatives. At this and subsequent meetings, the general manager of the ABC affiliate in Auburn

encouraged the development of a statewide media campaign that would focus the public's attention on Maine's illiteracy problem. In anticipation that an active PLUS effort would require some centralized coordination, the state's ABE coordinator solicited the support of those at the meeting. He requested that they write to the State Commissioner of Education, asking him to appoint an individual in the Division of Adult and Community Education, who could function as the state's PLUS consultant. The intent was to have a coordinator for the activities of the two regional task forces, as well as build connections with representatives from various organizational sectors across the state.

The formal announcement of the Central-Southern Maine task force was made at the group's second meeting, held in June 1986. A local Adult Education director and a representative from the ABC affiliate in Auburn were named as co-conveners of the task force. In order to encourage the involvement of community members in PLUS, the Adult Education directors attending this meeting were asked to form local PLUS task forces, drawing from the members of their ABE Advisory Councils. Since the membership of many of these councils included representatives from social service organizations, community agencies, local government, and businesses, the councils were a good base from which to solicit support for PLUS activities.

As the two regional task forces developed during the summer of 1986, continuing support was given to the regional task forces by the state's ABE coordinator. In January 1987, the assistant director of ABE in Gardiner was hired by the Division of Adult and Continuing Education to serve as the PLUS consultant for the statewide PLUS effort.

Related Literacy Efforts

Since 1974, literacy services in Maine had been provided by Literacy Volunteers of America, which has 12 state affiliates.

Over the years, the Division of Adult and Continuing Education has given financial support to LVA, and Division staff have been members of LVA's Board of Directors. In an effort to promote cooperation between the ABE and LVA service delivery systems, ABE directors were encouraged to utilize tutors in their programs and to refer ABE students to LVA.

A state effort to reach prospective adult learners in a three-county area, two rural counties and one densely-populated area, was undertaken in 1984. This program, Project Adult Literacy, was a cooperative effort between the state's Departments of Educational and Cultural Services and Health and Human Services. Letters from Educational and Cultural Services were sent by Health and Human Services to welfare, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), and food stamp recipients, encouraging them to enroll in General Educational Development (GED) classes. Prospective learners were asked to call the LVA hotline number, and over 1,500 callers were given information about educational and job training services. The effort in the counties was facilitated by a Project Literacy Contact person, who worked with the various agencies to encourage participation of their clients. Overall, the effort demonstrated the need for basic education services among both rural and urban residents in the state.

Task Force Organization and Operation

Roles of Co-Conveners. The Public Service Director from the ABC affiliate in Auburn worked with the Mechanic Falls-Poland AE director in facilitating the Central-Southern Maine task force's activities. They were been joined by the State's PLUS consultant in organizing the task force's meetings and in planning special events. As well, a number of the ABE directors and AE directors in the geographical area served by the task force established local task forces, which undertook individual activities, as well as joint events with the regional PLUS effort.

The state's PLUS consultant coordinated the overall PLUS campaign in the state by disseminating information about the national PLUS campaign, and the activities of both regional task forces. She also attended the regional task forces' meetings, as well as many of the local task force events. Given her central location in the state's capital, the PLUS consultant was able to establish contacts with representatives from business, social service organizations, local government agencies, libraries, and correctional institutions across the state. These contacts developed into collaborative relationships between these representatives and literacy service providers.

Task Force Meetings. The Central-Southern Maine task force met bimonthly during PLUS's first year, usually at the offices of the ABC affiliate in Auburn or at the PBS station. The ABC staff was responsible for mailing information about the meetings to task force members. Over the course of the year, the regional task force membership expanded to include not only media and education representatives, but also individuals from local businesses, libraries, and community agencies.

In organizing the Maine PLUS campaign, a concerted effort was made to customize task force activities to local communities. While the regional task forces provided a structure for sponsoring events that could attract community members from broad geographical areas, the local task forces were designed to stimulate involvement within individual communities. Thus, local task force conveners were encouraged to be creative in designing activities, and in holding events that reflected the interests and needs of the adults in local communities.

Awareness Raising

ABC Support. The ABC affiliate in Auburn was an active participant in the Central-Southern Maine task force since its inception. Both the station's general manager and public affairs staff person were instrumental in developing a comprehensive

media campaign, which heightened the awareness of Maine residents about the illiteracy problem in their state.

A key component of the media campaign was the PSAs that were created by the ABC affiliate. During PLUS's first year, the affiliate produced ten PSAs, which featured local and national celebrities. The PSAs, which presented the state's literacy hotline number on the tagline, were shown up to ten times a day on the ABC station. In addition to producing the PSAs, the affiliate collaborated with the Lewiston PBS station in broadcasting programs produced by PBS. The ABC affiliate also produced 15,000 posters advertising the campaign, and initiated the idea of having a reading marathon.

PBS Involvement. WCBB-TV's program manager supported the Maine PLUS effort through his participation in the regional task force meetings, and through his facilitation of the production of special programs. For example, the station produced and broadcast a one-hour program entitled "Illiteracy: The Hidden Problem," which featured scenarios performed by an improvisational theater group composed of northern New England educators. The program contained four vignettes that dramatized the problems associated with illiteracy, such as adults' inability to complete a job application form or to read the directions on a medicine bottle. The PBS station aired the program in September 1986, and then shared it with the ABC station, which broadcast it in January 1987. This second showing was in preparation for the broadcast of the "Learn to Read" series during the winter months. In addition to these activities, the PBS station hosted a "call in" after the broadcast of the ABC documentary in September 1986.

General Awareness Activities. The Central-Southern Maine task force members were creative in their development of a media campaign that used a variety of colorful posters, buttons, and cartoons to carry the literacy message. With assistance from Shads Advertising in Auburn, a series of posters featuring a super hero, Captain PLUS, and the caption, "READING IS POWER,"

were distributed by local task force members to community agencies, education programs, libraries, and businesses. Captain PLUS also appeared on bumper stickers, mailing labels, and flyers.

Community Participation

Business and Industry. The Maine PLUS campaign, as well as the national focus on literacy, prompted the print media in the state to become involved in combating the illiteracy problem. For example, the Portland Press Herald, a Guy P. Gannett newspaper, began a literacy initiative in which management identified six areas that will be considered in the development of a detailed action plan. The Gannett newspapers had been involved in the Newspaper in Education program for a number of years, and supported the PLUS campaign through publication of articles about task force events, and by working with the state's PLUS consultant in designing their activities.

A major literacy effort was undertaken by the Bangor Daily News, which serves the Northern Maine task force area. The newspaper's publisher learned about other newspaper's literacy-related activities, and wanted the Daily News to have a prominent role in improving opportunities for adults in need of literacy services. Under the guidance of the newspaper's director of promotions, a multi-faceted literacy program was developed. To facilitate the implementation of this program, the director of promotions worked with staff from the state's Division of Adult and Community Education, local AE programs, and LVA affiliates in organizing various activities. Employees were encouraged to become literacy tutors, and were given release time for this activity. In order to recruit adult learners and tutors, the newspaper instituted a toll-free telephone number, which was answered by newspaper staff as "Right to Read." Adults calling this number were interviewed and referred to either an ABE or LVA program, depending on their need. In addition to the toll-free

line, the newspaper published the "Learn to Read" series, as well as numerous articles about the illiteracy problem, task force events, and the successes of literacy students. All of these activities resulted in increased numbers of adult learners and tutors participating in education programs in the Bangor area.

Special Events. To foster the involvement of individuals from across the southern Maine area, the regional task force held a Reading Marathon in Portland in June 1987. The event featured both prominent Maine authors, who read from their own works, and community leaders, legislators, and citizens, who read from the publications of other Maine authors. The readings were conducted in ten-minute segments throughout a 12-hour period, and the readers were sponsored by friends, businesses, and service clubs as part of a fundraising activity. Local television personalities, educators, and business representatives hosted the event held at the City Center, which included live music, a booksale, and door prizes.

The Reading Marathon was successful both in generating publicity about literacy and the Maine PLUS efforts, and in raising funds. Based on its positive results, the Marathon will be repeated by the regional task force during PLUS's second year.

Volunteer and Adult Learner Recruitment

Hotline Number. Literacy Volunteers of America had operated a statewide hotline in Maine, funded partially by the Division of Adult and Community Education since the mid 1970s. When the PLUS campaign began in 1986, there was a desire not to have two hotline numbers, so the Division staff worked with LVA to designate their existing number as the PLUS number. Supplemental funding was given to LVA to enable them to respond to an increased number of calls. Adults calling the hotline number were greeted with "Adult Learning Opportunities," and were referred to an LVA tutor, an ABE program, or to a high school completion program, depending upon their need and geographical location.

The calls were recorded on a referral form, and copies were sent to the caller and service provider, and one was kept in the LVA office.

The PLUS hotline was an effective method for generating interest in the national campaign. As the year progressed, the number of calls increased. For example, the hotline received approximately 250 calls per month during 1986, in contrast to an average of 750 calls per month during the first six months of 1987.

Local Task Force Recruitment Efforts. The local PLUS task forces were inventive in their attempts to reach adults in their communities. The Maine geography presented special challenges to task forces, especially those located in the sparsely-populated regions of the state.

One particularly creative recruitment campaign was that undertaken by the Waterville task force, which is part of the Northern Maine regional PLUS effort. Under the direction of the Waterville Adult and Community Education program's director and ABE coordinator, the task force sponsored different activities each month, designed to solicit involvement from all sectors of the community. For example, the task force published a newsletter with lists of upcoming events, and disseminated it widely. Radio PSAs were produced and distributed to local ABE directors, who customized them to their areas. In order to recruit tutors, calls were made to every fifth name in the Waterville phone book. In all of these activities, the task force organizers attempted to involve service clubs, businesses, libraries, and a variety of community organizations. These efforts resulted in the hiring of nine new instructors for the Waterville ABE program, whose enrollment increased from 85 to 210 adult learners.

Impact on Service Provision

Collaboration. A major effect of the Maine PLUS effort was the enhanced collaboration among literacy and basic education

service providers. Joint training of ABE instructors and LVA tutors was initiated, which promoted the cross referral of learners between programs. As a result of ABE instructors increased knowledge about the teaching strategies used by LVA tutors, they began to use tutors in their programs more frequently.

The local library programs also increased the literacy services that they provided, and library staff worked with ABE and LVA programs in organizing their literacy efforts. For example, the libraries in six cities opened "Easy Reading Sections," and the ABE staffs in these locations helped librarians to identify appropriate books for the collection.

A few of the Maine libraries received grants under the U.S. Department of Education's Library Literacy Program, which enabled them to develop literacy activities. For example, the Auburn Public Library's Community Literacy Project, coordinated by a VISTA volunteer, recruited adult learners and tutors, trained tutors, and worked with other service providers in referring adult learners.

Program Growth. The regional and local PLUS task force activities in Maine resulted in both increased numbers of volunteers and adult learners. Although the response by volunteers was greater than that of adult learners, as the campaign progressed, so did the numbers of learners requesting services.

The extensive impact of PLUS in Maine was evidenced by extensive program growth. Inquiries to ABE programs doubled, as did the number of communities applying for state ABE grants. In some areas, the GED classes expanded to the same extent as literacy programs. These results indicate that the campaign reached a variety of adults with differing educational needs in the state.

Summary

The Maine PLUS strategy was one of combining local community efforts with regional support systems, in an attempt to create a

statewide literacy network. Critical to the success of this approach was the flexibility encouraged in the development of local task forces, in which conveners were urged to seek support from a broad spectrum of community members.

This local-regional strategy was facilitated by the presence of a state PLUS coordinator, who served as a link between the two regional task forces, and was a centralized source of information for local task force activities. The coordinator identified new opportunities for involving businesses, governmental agencies, community, civic, and social service organizations.

The Central-Southern Maine task force was successful in implementing a media campaign in which the combined efforts of the local ABC and PBS stations, newspapers, and educational services produced an effective strategy for reaching adult learners and volunteers. A hallmark of the media campaign was the creative and innovative approaches used for carrying the literacy message.

VI. OREGON PLUS TASK FORCE

VI. OREGON PLUS TASK FORCE

Context

As a statewide PLUS effort, the Oregon task force has a central Steering Committee, as well as 12 local PLUS coalitions located throughout the state. Under the leadership of the Oregon Department of Education's Adult Education Director, the PLUS Steering Committee functioned as a mechanism for organizing awareness and recruitment activities that have brought attention to the state's literacy needs.

While Oregon's literacy rate is considered among the highest in the nation--it is estimated that there are approximately 127,000 functionally illiterate adults residing in the state--its unemployment rate has been a continuing problem. The decline in the state's lumber industry brought about the need for new job training and skill remediation programs, particularly for adults living outside of the Portland metropolitan area. For residents of Portland's inner-city neighborhoods, participation in education and training programs is an essential step for obtaining employment and improving the quality of their lives.

The PLUS campaign provided an opportunity for representatives from a variety of organizations in Oregon to work together to build awareness about the state's education and training needs, as well as to expand opportunities for adults to improve their skills. With support from the statewide PLUS Steering Committee, local coalitions worked effectively to build cooperative relationships among education service providers, the media, community and civic organizations, local governmental agencies, voluntary associations, and businesses.

This case study describes the Steering Committee's activities during PLUS's first year, with examples drawn from the work of a number of the local literacy coalitions that were organized in Oregon.

Task Force Development

A number of simultaneous events prompted the development of Oregon's PLUS effort. In January 1986, ACTION sponsored a Northwest Conference that brought together representatives from a variety of education, community, and volunteer agencies. This conference inspired participants to begin local coalitions in support of the emerging national literacy campaign.

During the winter of 1986, PLUS's National Outreach Director at WQED in Pittsburgh contacted the state's Adult Education Director and requested that she initiate a PLUS task force in Oregon. At about the same time, the Public Affairs Director for the ABC affiliate in Portland, KATU, received information about the PLUS campaign and, with the affiliate's Executive Vice President, decided that KATU would be an active supporter of the campaign. Both had heard previously about ABC's plans for PLUS at an ABC affiliates' meeting. In addition, KATU's Executive Vice President, as head of the ABC affiliates' National Viewers Advisory Committee, had recommended that literacy be considered as a possible affiliates' project.

Given KATU's interest in literacy and support of the PLUS campaign, the Public Affairs Director convened a meeting in Portland in July 1986. Invited were individuals currently involved in some aspect of literacy services, or who had the potential of becoming involved. The state's Adult Education Director, as well as a representative from Oregon Public Broadcasting, KOAP in Portland, worked with KATU's Public Affairs Director in organizing the meeting, during which participants were asked to volunteer their time to serve on the PLUS Steering Committee. It was intended that this committee would provide a structure for organizing statewide PLUS activities, and for encouraging the development of local coalitions across the state.

As a result of the positive response from those attending the July meeting, the Steering Committee was organized as a new PLUS effort. While the initial committee consisted of representatives

from the State Department of Education, community colleges, higher education institutions, media, libraries, and employment training agencies, its membership expanded over time. Increasing support was given to the committee by businesses, civic groups, and community organizations.

Related Literacy Efforts

Community colleges in Oregon have been the major deliverers of literacy services since 1964. Programs, such as that sponsored by Portland Community College, have provided tutoring to adults in addition to ABE and ESL instruction. Another source of literacy instruction have been the efforts undertaken by Oregon Literacy, the statewide Laubach council which was organized in 1966. The original council was formed in Portland, and volunteer councils have expanded throughout the state, such that there currently are 21 active councils.

During the year prior to PLUS, two VISTA volunteers under the sponsorship of Oregon Literacy worked with the community college's ABE programs in recruiting and training tutors. The volunteers were responsible for conducting public relations activities, recruiting volunteers, and organizing tutor-training workshops with Oregon Literacy and the community colleges. During 1986 the effort expanded, additional volunteers were sponsored, and the organizational management of the VISTA program in Oregon was transferred to the State Education Department. The VISTA volunteers played a critical role in the development of the PLUS campaign in Oregon, through their work in the community colleges and libraries establishing local coalitions, and recruiting and training tutors.

One effort to raise awareness about illiteracy prior to PLUS was initiated by Oregon Representative Ron Wyden, who convened a meeting of literacy providers in September 1985. He challenged them to find volunteers, and to make a concerted effort to serve adults in need of literacy instruction.

Finally, the State Education Department's Division of Adult

Education funded a special project in 1984-85 to produce videotapes about the illiteracy problem. These productions produced by Oregon Literacy, highlighted the services provided by the community college's ABE programs and the Oregon Literacy councils. The videotapes were used by literacy service providers and local PLUS coalitions in their awareness activities.

Task Force Organization and Operation

Steering Committee. The state's Adult Education Director guided the overall operation of the PLUS Steering Committee, which acted as a policy and planning group for the task force. In organizing the PLUS effort, the director worked with members of the state's Adult Education Advisory Committee, which provides guidance in the operation of the statewide ABE program administered through the community college system.

Representatives from both the ABC affiliate and the Oregon Public Broadcasting System played critical roles on the Steering Committee. They worked with the convener in designing public awareness activities and in establishing contacts with individuals not involved previously in literacy services. The ABC affiliate's Director of Public Relations elicited support from a number of business representatives, who have attended Steering Committee meetings and gave both financial and in-kind assistance to the campaign. The PBS station's Volunteer Coordinator also enlisted the members of the station's volunteer force to assist with PLUS events.

During the early months of PLUS, the Steering Committee members created a subcommittee structure to organize their activities and effectively use their members' expertise. These subcommittees, Tutor Training, Business and Literacy, and Resources, set goals and pursued a number of activities during PLUS's first year.

Local Coalitions. As convener of the Steering Committee, the Adult Education Director utilized her network of ABE directors in the community colleges to foster the development of local coalitions. This effort was facilitated by the VISTA volunteers, who

assisted the community colleges in the development of literacy programs. The Oregon State Library and Oregon Literacy encouraged their local programs to cooperate with the VISTAs and ABE directors in organizing local PLUS coalitions.

The local coalitions developed gradually during the year, primarily at the impetus of the community colleges' ABE directors. In forming the coalitions, the ABE directors were encouraged to work with individuals representing the PLUS national organizations, such as Altrusa and the Rotary Club. The Steering Committee members suggested that local coalition leaders tailor their efforts to their communities' literacy needs, drawing upon the resources provided by the local ABC affiliates and the Oregon Public Broadcasting stations.

Task Force Meetings. The PLUS Steering Committee met monthly during the early months of PLUS, and then convened periodically to plan specific task force events. The state's Adult Education Director provided information to Steering Committee members through her state ABE newsletter, which includes reports on both the committee's and local coalitions' activities. The community college ABE directors also held quarterly meetings, during which they discussed their local coalitions' functioning, as well as the statewide PLUS effort.

During PLUS's first year, the Steering Committee concentrated on coalescing business support for literacy. Working through their subcommittees, members planned specific activities, including a "Literacy in the Workplace" conference, which were designed to attract businesses' attention to the literacy issue and to encourage the establishment of workplace literacy programs.

Steering Committee members also undertook fundraising activities, such as the submission of a grant proposal to the Gannett Foundation. At the impetus of the state's Adult Education Director, Steering Committee members met during December 1986 to prepare a winning proposal to Gannett's Literacy Challenge Program. The Gannett project, based at Oregon State University, was designed to:

a) improve the staff development opportunities for ABE instructors and literacy tutors, b) establish a database for tracking adult learners and volunteers, and c) develop materials for identifying and instructing learning-disabled students.

Awareness Raising

ABC Support. Portland's ABC affiliate, which covers a three-county broadcast area, was a primary supporter of the PLUS effort in Oregon. The Public Affairs Director organized the PLUS campaign's publicity, and worked with personnel at the ABC affiliate on a number of literacy programs. She also assisted with a number of the Portland coalition's activities. KATU's public affairs program "Town Hall," produced by the Public Affairs Director, featured a program called "Illiteracy: The Silent Nightmare," in September 1986. The Public Affairs Director also wrote the brochure for Portland's literacy hotline, "Literacy Line," and obtained financial support from the K-Mart Corporation to pay for the brochure's printing.

The ABC affiliate produced PSAs about Literacy Line and the PLUS campaign, and has broadcast the network spots regularly. The network PSAs carried the national Contact hotline number initially; the number was then replaced by both the Literacy Line and Oregon Literacy numbers. In addition to special programs and PSAs, KATU broadcast the "Learn to Read" series during the spring 1987, and showed a number of PSAs prior to the series. Finally, two Oregon literacy students were featured on the national network's "Learner of the Month" PSAs.

The ABC affiliate also made financial contributions toward a number of literacy activities, including Multnomah Library's adult literacy collection, the literacy line, and the business and literacy conference.

PBS Involvement. Oregon Public Broadcasting has four stations in the state, with Portland's KOAP being the major station. KOAP's Volunteer Coordinator was instrumental in coalescing support for

PLUS activities from the station's volunteer corps, and worked with the Director of Volunteers in organizing the PLUS task force's "Literacy in the Workplace" conference.

During September 1986, KOAP simulcast the ABC affiliate's "Illiteracy: The Silent Nightmare," and sponsored the call-in program "Project Literacy, Your Turn," which followed ABC's Town Hall broadcast. During the Town Hall program, ABC viewers were asked to switch channels to the hour-long PBS program. Over 600 calls were received during the call-in program, with approximately two-thirds of the calls coming from prospective tutors. The PBS volunteers who answered the calls recorded information about the callers on a standard form, and referred the callers to the nearest Oregon Literacy or ABE program.

In addition to providing support by organizing programs and special events, KOAP's Volunteer Coordinator also participated in both the Steering Committee's and the Portland coalition's activities. Oregon's PLUS effort benefited greatly from the cooperation given by both the PBS station and ABC affiliate, who worked together on a number of PLUS events.

General Awareness Efforts. The activities undertaken by the two local broadcasting systems were enhanced by awareness events that were organized by Steering Committee members. For example, during September 1986 the Portland PLUS coalition and the Multnomah County Library sponsored a Literacy Day Fair held in Portland's Pioneer Square. On display at the Fair were exhibits that offered information about basic education and training services in the Portland area. Portland's mayor opened the fair, which was covered by the local ABC affiliate, with a Literacy Day proclamation.

Print media throughout the state supported the PLUS campaign through the publication of special interest stories about adult learners, and through the reporting of state task force and local coalition activities. Newspapers in metropolitan areas such as Portland, as well as in small cities like Astoria, called attention to the state's need to address the literacy needs of its residents.

JTPA newsletters, both statewide to employees and balance of state to employers, also provided coverage PLUS events.

Community Participation

Business and Industry. During PLUS's first year, the Steering Committee members sponsored a major event to solicit support from business and industry in the state. This event, a conference called "The Bottom Line: Literacy in the Oregon Workplace," was held in May 1987 in Portland. Participants from education, community and social service agencies, local government, employment and training groups, and business and industry gathered to hear speakers, such as Harold M. McGraw, Jr., dicuss the illiteracy problem in Oregon, and the steps that can be taken to combat it. Oregon Public Broadcasting's Director of Volunteers chaired the conference, and worked with KOAP's volunteers in generating corporate sponsorship for the event. The ABC affiliate's Public Affairs Director organized the conference's publicity, including writing the press releases. Several hundred individuals representing the major businesses in the state were invited, and approximately 250 Portland businessmen participated in the luncheon.

The conference provided an opportunity for business and industry representatives to become aware of the various steps that they can take to improve their employees' productivity, including the establishment of on-site literacy programs in their businesses. As a result of the positive reactions to the conference, Steering Comittee members planned to contact the business and industry participants to offer assistance in their literacy activities.

Oregon's PLUS campaign stimulated the interest of businesses in the state to give financial and in-kind support to local coalition activities. For example, the Code-A-Phone Corporation in the Portland area donated telephone equipment to the Literacy Line at the Multnomah County Library. An electronics firm in Portland, with a high percentage of foreign-born employees, sponsored on-site English-as-a-second-language classes for these employees. The owner

of a Glendale lumber mill established a literacy program in his company, to encourage employees to improve their basic skills. As well, a representative from the city of Newberg's Public Works Department called a local PLUS coalition member to locate a tutor for an employee who needed literacy instruction. All of these examples illustrate the impact that the media campaign has had both on raising awareness about illiteracy and in encouraging action to combat it.

Community Groups. A number of professional and civic groups chose literacy as a focus for their organization's activities. The Telephone Pioneers in Portland, an association of current and retired telephone company employees, designated literacy as their organization's priority during 1986-1987. Voluntary organizations, such as RSVP, encouraged their members to tutor, and supported the literacy activities of local PLUS coalitions. For example, the Grants Pass Oregon Literacy Council received a small grant from RSVP to support tutor training. While the individual efforts of these groups may be modest, the combined effect has been the generation of human and financial resources to support a wide variety of literacy activities across Oregon.

Volunteer and Adult Learner Recruitment

Hotline Number. During May 1987, a statewide hotline number was established at the Multnomah County Library in Portland. With funding under a U.S. Department of Education Library Services and Construction Act grant, the library worked with Portland Community College and other PLUS Steering Committee members to create the Literacy Line.

Brochures written by the ABC affiliate's Public Relations Director were distributed widely in the Portland metropolitan area, as well as in other locations in the state. Persons calling the Literacy Line either are interviewed by a volunteer who answers the phone, or are asked to leave a message on an answering machine. Once information has been elicited from the caller, the individual

is referred to the closest ABE or Oregon Literacy program depending on the caller's needs. The Literacy Line calls are entered into a computer, and callers' names are given both to the ABE and Oregon Literacy programs for follow up.

Local Coalition Recruitment Efforts. The VISTA volunteers were an invaluable resource for the local PLUS coalitions in Oregon. Based in the community colleges' ABE programs, they worked to establish literacy programs in conjunction with the Oregon Literacy councils. The VISTAs had responsibility for a variety of awareness, recruitment, referral, and training activities.

Each of the PLUS coalitions assessed its local literacy needs, and created a recruitment strategy based on these needs. For example, the ABC affiliate that serves Lane County assisted the local PLUS coalition in designing promotional efforts, in fundraising activities, and in providing continued coverage of the literacy issue. The coalition members met with the personnel managers in local businesses to discuss their literacy needs, and to determine the types of assistance that might be provided by local educational services. The Mt. Hood Literacy Coalition, consisting of representatives from groups such as the community college, Salvation Army, Catholic Family Services, county library, and the Hispanic Services Program, has met monthly since its inception in January 1987. Coalition members have worked to reach the diverse group of adults in the area who could benefit from literacy services.

Impact on Service Provision

Collaboration. The Oregon PLUS effort provided the impetus for increased collaboration between the ABE programs and Oregon Literacy and stimulated the formation of new cooperative relationships. For example, library participation in literacy was facilitated greatly with the LSCA grants that were received by the Oregon State Library and a number of the county libraries. The State Library's representative, who is a member of the PLUS Steering Committee,

worked with 50 libraries across the state to help them establish literacy programs. Each of these libraries received a small grant to purchase "new reader" materials, and to participate in tutor training.

A number of local coalitions sought the support of local PIC members, in an effort to bridge the education-training gap. For example, PIC representatives on the Lane County Coalition worked with local business members to sponsor a summer program that highlighted the literacy needs of businesses.

Program Growth. PLUS had a significant impact on the two major literacy service providers in Oregon. The numbers of adult learners served by Oregon Literacy increased by 48 percent (440 students) during PLUS's first year, such that there are waiting lists of adult learners who want to be tutored. The ABE programs also experienced growth. While the increase in volunteers, (80 percent), was greater than that of adult learners, 29 percent (6,000 students), both represent a major impact on the state's ABE program.

Finally, PLUS broadened the services offered by ABE programs in community colleges through the assistance provided by VISTA volunteers and the increased use of tutors. While many of the ABE programs in Oregon had utilized volunteers for a number of years, PLUS enhanced the breadth and scope of their services.

Summary

The Oregon PLUS effort attempted to coalesce statewide support for improving local community efforts in literacy. The establishment of a central group, the PLUS Steering Committee, under the direction of the state's Adult Education Director, provided an overall direction to the campaign, while allowing the independent development of local coalitions. These coalitions were created to respond to the unique literacy needs of the communities that they serve.

The success of the PLUS effort was due, in part, to the substantial support provided by the ABC affiliate in Portland and the

Oregon Public Broadcasting stations. Both systems worked closely with the PLUS Steering Committee and local coalitions in providing public relations and volunteer assistance for task force activities.

The greatest impact of PLUS in Oregon was on the growth of both major literacy service providers--Oregon Literacy and the community college system's ABE programs. Both programs experienced increases in the numbers of adult learners they serve and in the numbers of volunteers who would like to become tutors. This growth is indicative of the success of the overall Oregon PLUS campaign.

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